

INDIAN FAIRY TALES.

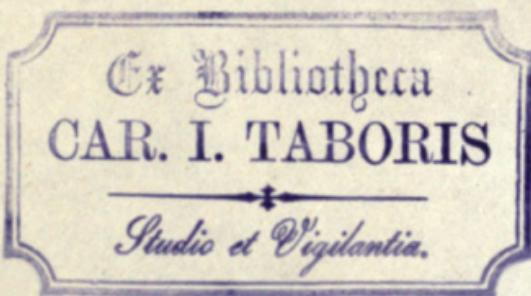
MARK
THORNHILL.

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INDIAN FAIRY TALES.



Frontispiece, p. 34.

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INDIAN FAIRY TALES

COLLECTED BY

MARK THORNHILL

BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE RETIRED

AUTHOR OF

"A MAGISTRATE'S EXPERIENCE OF THE INDIAN MUTINY," ETC. ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY EDITH SCANNELL

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TO

MY LITTLE GRANDCHILDREN

MILLY AND GEOFFREY.

545134
FOLKLORE



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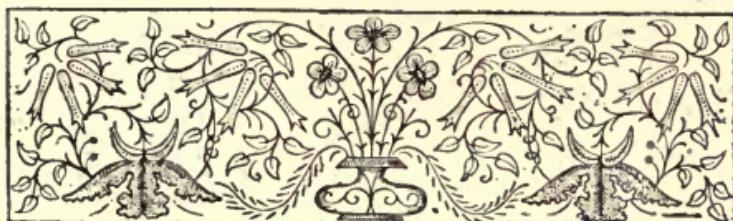
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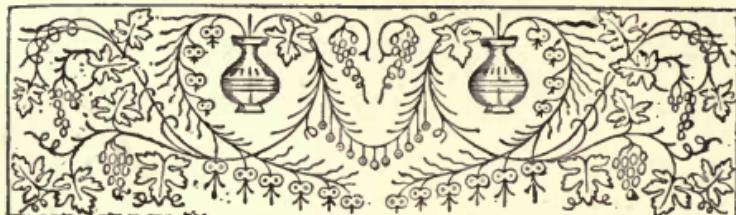
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NOTE.

*All the Tales in this volume were taken down
by me, at various times, when in India, from oral
narration of natives.*



THE PERFUMER'S DAUGHTER.

LONG ago, once in the East, there lived a king. The king had horses and elephants, treasures, and great dominions. But one thing he lacked, he was childless. The want of offspring grieved him sadly, and daily he offered supplications that an heir might be granted him. At length, after many years, his prayers were answered, and a young prince was born.

On the birth of the prince the astrologers assembled, and cast his nativity. They found that

he would be happy and prosperous, but that in his eighteenth year a danger threatened him.

So the king had a garden constructed, and surrounded it with a high wall, and when the prince had completed his seventeenth year, the king made him reside in the garden, till the period of danger should expire. But after three months the prince wearied of the garden, and besought his father that for one day he might be permitted to leave it and to follow the chase.

The king consulted the astrologers. The astrologers examined the stars, and made answer, that on the first day of the new moon the prince might hunt in the East, and also in the South and the West, but in the North there was danger. The king took a promise from the prince that he would avoid the North, and then the king gave his consent; and on the first day of the new

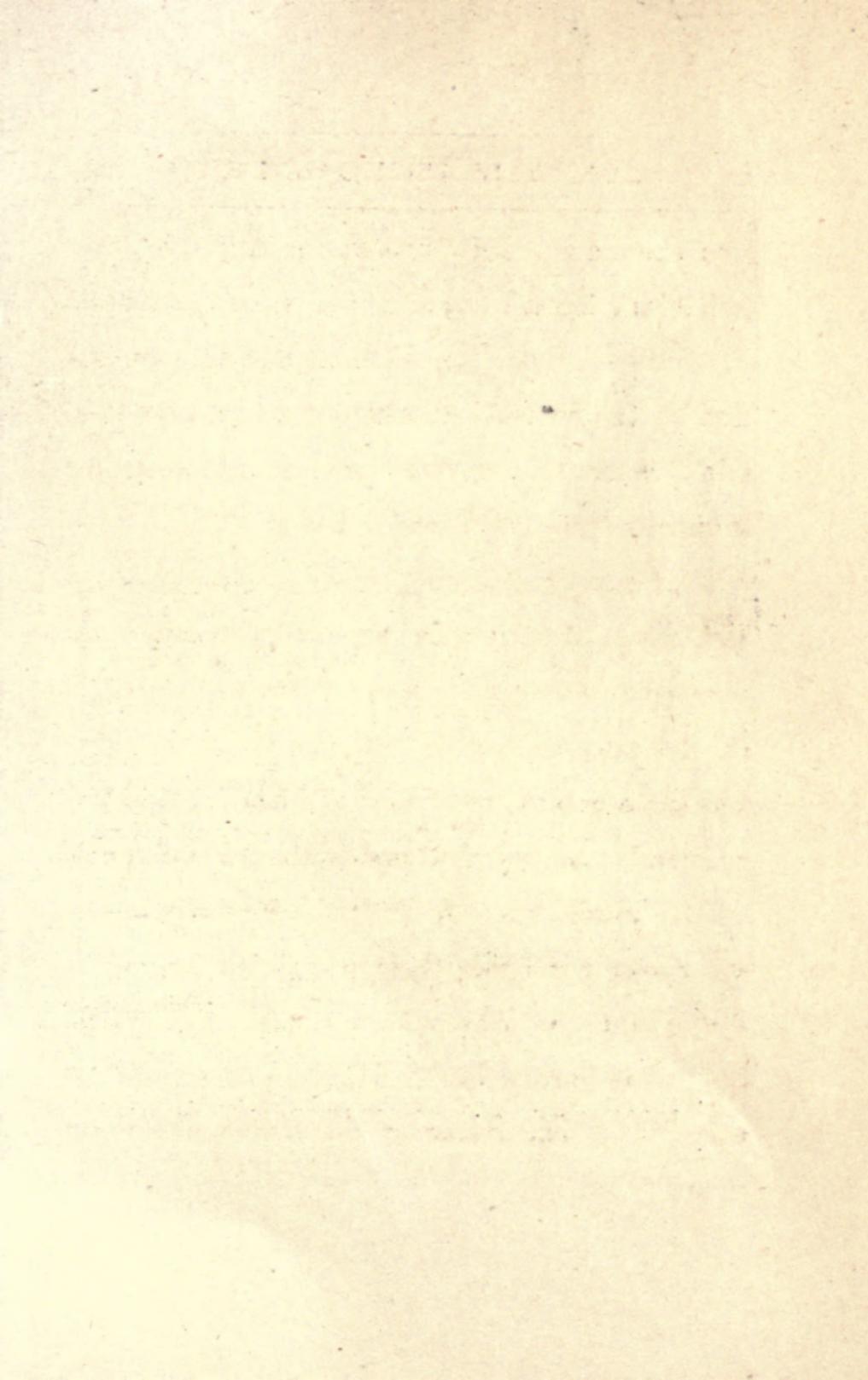
moon the prince set out with his hounds and attendants, and with the son of the chief minister, who was his companion.

The prince hunted in the West and the South and found nothing, but when he entered the East the hounds started an antelope. The antelope ran, and the hounds followed. As the chase continued the attendants fell behind, till at length the prince was left riding alone, with only the minister's son. Soon after, they reached the forest, and the antelope disappeared in a thicket. The prince looked, and saw, that without knowing it, he had entered the region of the North.

The prince and the minister's son called together the hounds, and set off to return; presently they lost their way, and arrived at a great walled enclosure. The enclosure had neither gate nor entrance, but at one place the branch of a

tree grew over, and touched the branches of a tree of the forest. The prince and the minister's son tethered their horses, then they climbed the tree of the forest, and descended on the other side. When they reached the ground, they found themselves in a beautiful garden.

They wandered down one path and another and came to a marble pavilion. Inside were three chairs of gold brocade, and an ivory table. On the table were three plates of fruit and cake, and three goblets of water. The prince and the minister's son entered and rested, they drank of the water, and ate of the fruit and cakes. Then they continued their stroll, and arrived at a fountain; by the fountain a man was standing. The prince inquired of the man who he was? The man answered that he was the gardener.





"The Prince got angry, and drew his sword."—*Page 21.*

The prince asked, to whom the garden belonged? The man replied, "To my mistress."

The prince asked again, "But who is your mistress? and where does she live?"

The man made no answer.

The prince got angry, and drew his sword. The man fell at his feet, and said, "My Lord! if I tell, she will kill me."

The prince promised not to betray the man, and offered him a piece of gold, and then the man replied—

"My mistress is the perfumer's daughter, and she lives in the city, in the lane by the great tank."

When the prince and the minister's son had seen all the garden, the man conducted them to the overhanging tree. They crossed the wall, mounted their horses, and before the sun had

set they returned to the city. But all the night the prince lay awake, thinking of the perfumer's daughter. The prince thought of her all the next day, and the following ; in the end he resolved to marry her. The king and the queen tried to dissuade the prince, but when they found him determined, they yielded, and the king sent, and summoned the perfumer.

The perfumer supposed that the king wanted perfumes, so he packed up the best of his scents and essences, and repaired to the palace.

He showed the king attar of roses, and attar of jasmine, and various other kinds of perfumes, and whatever he showed the king purchased.

When the perfumer had exhibited all his wares, the king called him near, and said, "Sir Perfumer ! there is something more that I desire. Will you give it me ?" The perfumer thought

to himself, “What is it the king can want?” So he answered cautiously, “Your Majesty! if it is mine to bestow, certainly I will give it.”

The king repeated his question, “Sir Perfumer, what I desire, will you give me?” The perfumer replied as before, “Your Majesty! if it is mine to give, I will give it.” Then the king said plainly, “Sir Perfumer, I want your daughter for my son: will you bestow her?” The perfumer answered, “My Lord! the daughter belongs to the mother: it is for her to bestow her.” The king bade the perfumer go home, and inquire of his wife, and return the next day, with her answer.

When the perfumer reached home and told his wife, they both began to weep and lament, for their daughter was a fairy and might not wed a mortal, and yet if they refused, they feared

the king's anger. Their daughter heard them weeping, and entered. When she learned the cause, she cast down her eyes, and stood silent for the space of three minutes; then she raised her head, and said, "Father! I will marry the prince, but on three conditions."

When she had thus spoken, she took a pen and paper, and wrote the conditions, and folded and sealed the paper, and gave it to the perfumer. The next morning the perfumer presented himself before the king and said, "My Lord! my daughter will marry the prince, but on three conditions," and then he presented the paper. The king broke the seal and read. The first condition that the daughter had written was this, that she should come to the palace in seven veils, each veil reaching to her feet. The second condition was, that the prince should

not lift one of the veils, no, not so much as to see even the sole of her foot. The third condition was, that she should leave the palace each day at sunset, and remain the night in her father's house.

When the king had read the conditions he was wroth, for he thought that the perfumer was mocking him. But the prince insisted that the conditions should be accepted. So the preparations for the marriage were commenced. When they were completed the prince repaired in great state to the perfumer's house, and the bride came forth in her seven veils, and entered a golden palanquin, and was conveyed to the palace. At night the city was illuminated, and all the poor were feasted.

When the prince assented to the conditions, he did not think that the princess would long

insist on them. He made sure that she would soon raise her veils of herself. And when she had seen the grandeur of the palace, he did not expect that she would care to return to her father's shop in the lane. But in these expectations he was disappointed. One month passed, and three months passed, and still the princess came each morning in her seven veils, she never lifted even one the livelong day, and always as the sun set she returned to her father's house.

When four months had thus gone by the prince began to pine; soon he fell ill. Physicians were sent for, but they did him no good. The prince said, "I shall never get well till the princess lifts her veils and allows me to behold her face."

The king and the queen were filled with grief, and so also was the prince's companion, the chief

minister's son. One day the minister's son was lamenting, when his servant said, "My Lord! I have heard that beyond the forest, by the river, there dwells a Fukkeer, a holy man who practises austerities, and has acquired the knowledge of secrets. May be, he would give a charm to cause the princess to raise her veils."

The minister's son told the prince, and the prince resolved to set out and seek the Fukkeer. So he obtained permission from the king to hunt for seven days, and then he and the minister's son mounted their horses and secretly left the city. They rode through the jungle and through the forest; on the third day they reached the river.

The Fukkeer was seated in a circle of fire; he had long hair, and his body was covered with ashes. The prince advanced and saluted him,

and made his request. The Fukkeer bade the prince rest for the night ; on the morrow, he said, he would give him the charm. The prince and the minister's son remained the night in the Fukkeer's hut. The Fukkeer stayed without and performed incantations. All night the rain fell, and the wild beasts roared. In the morning the Fukkeer gave the prince a silver ring. The Fukkeer told the prince, that when the princess left the palace, he should slip the ring on his finger and follow her home, and he would see her face. "But," he said, "for your life do not touch her, or let her see the ring, or know that you have been here and obtained it."

The prince promised to observe these directions, then he thanked the Fukkeer and bade him farewell, and he and the minister's son mounted their horses and returned to the palace.



"The Fukkeer stayed without and performed incantations."

—Page 28.

When the prince entered his chamber the princess began to question him, and to inquire where he had been and who he had seen. The prince gave evasive answers; the princess repeated her questions. Suddenly she looked up, and saw that the sun had set. She hurriedly called her attendants, entered her palanquin and returned home. The prince slipped the ring on his finger and followed.

As the prince passed the palace gates he noticed that the guards did not salute him, and he found in the street that no one made way, and then he perceived that he had become invisible.

When the princess reached her father's house she alighted and entered. And as she entered, the prince slipped in unnoticed behind her. As the princess entered, her mother said, "Daughter,

how late you are to-day!" The princess replied, "I stayed to question the prince, and he would not answer." Then she added, "Mother! the prince has been to the forest, and I mistrust that he reached the river, and has learnt my secret."

The prince thought to himself, "What secret is it that she is hiding from me?"

Then the princess said again to her mother, "Mother, bring my supper quickly, for the time passes, and I am hungry." The perfumer's wife brought a dish of rice and lentils and set it before the princess. The princess ate slowly, for she had to pass the food beneath her seven veils. The prince also was hungry, he stretched out his hand and helped himself. Before the princess had eaten three mouthfuls, lo! the dish was empty.

The princess was puzzled. She called to her

mother to refill the dish, but her mother replied, "Daughter, all that was prepared you have eaten. But wait, and I will cook more." The princess answered, "How can I wait, mother, when the time is passing?" and as she spoke, she arose and went up to her chamber. The prince followed, and as he followed he wondered and thought, "Is she going anywhere that she cannot wait?"

When the princess reached her chamber, she took off one by one her seven veils, and the room was illumined with the radiance of her beauty. The prince gazed in wonder, for she was fairer than the moonshine or the flowers.

When the princess had taken off her seven veils, she commenced to adorn herself. She put on a dress of silver tissue and covered her hair with diamonds. The prince, as he looked, was

filled with doubts and jealousy, "Is it to meet a lover," he thought, "that she thus arrays herself?"

When the princess had adorned herself, she passed through the doorway to the terrace, and sat down on a bed with railings. The prince placed himself at the other end. Then the princess began to sing, and as she sang, the bed rose. The bed rose, and rose, above the roofs, above the towers, and then it flew and flew, over the plain, and over the forest, till it reached the river, and stood above the stream.

The princess leaned over the railing and called, "Sister Rose! Sister Rose! come quickly, for the night passes, and the king awaits us."

As the princess spoke, there came a ripple on the water, and a fairy appeared, and floated upwards. The fairy was clad in red, and had rubies

in her hair; she carried in her hand a dish of fruit, and seated herself beside the princess. The princess took an orange, and the fairy took a citron: the prince stretched out his hand, and seized the rest of the fruit. The princess looked, and lo! the dish was empty. The princess was puzzled, but she thought that perhaps the other fruit had fallen out.

The princess sang again, and as she sang the bed rose, and flew, and descended above a ruined well. The princess leaned over the railing, and called, "Sister Emerald! Sister Emerald! come quickly, for the night passes and the king awaits us." The prince wondered, "What king can she mean?" He thought, "There is no king in all this region but the king my father."

As the princess called, the water rippled, and a fairy rose from beneath the surface, and floated

up and seated herself by the princess. She was clad in green, and wore emeralds in her hair, and in her hand she carried a dish with seven cakes. The princess took one cake, the two fairies took each another. The prince reached out his arm and seized the remainder. Presently the princess looked, and lo! the dish was empty! The princess was puzzled, but she thought as before, that perhaps the rest had fallen. Then she sang again, and the bed rose, and flew, and lighted down in the garden in the forest that had no gate nor entrance.

The garden was illumined with ten thousand lamps, the birds sang, and the fountains sparkled, and the flowers exhaled the most delicious perfumes. It seemed to the prince as if he had entered the gardens of paradise. The princess and the fairies sauntered through the garden,

and rested in the pavilion. Presently the princess looked up, and said, "Sisters! let us hasten, for the night passes, and the king will be angry."

The princess and her companions then seated themselves on the bed, the prince placed himself in the vacant corner. The princess commenced to sing, and as she sang the bed rose. The bed rose and rose, above the trees, above the clouds, till it reached the blue sky and the milky way. Then the princess sang louder, and the bed began to fly along the milky way. It flew and flew faster than the wind, faster than a rocket, till at length it arrived at a great palace. Ten thousand lights streamed from the windows, a thousand guards stood before the gateway.

The princess and the fairies alighted, the prince followed. They went through one court and another and came to a great hall. At the end

of the hall, on his throne of jewels, sat Raja Indra, the king of the skies. Beside him were his guards and nobles, and before him, ready to commence their dance, stood the thousand fairies.

King Indra's brow was clouded; as the princess entered he exclaimed—"Fairy of the diamonds! Fairy of the diamonds! why have you delayed your coming?"

As King Indra spoke the thousand fairies trembled, on the earth below it seemed to thunder. The princess and her companions took their place among the fairies, the music struck up, and the thousand fairies commenced to dance. As the dancing continued, King Indra's brow began to clear, then he smiled, next he laid down his wand and beat time to the music. The prince crept softly behind, and stole the wand away.

The fairies danced till the night was nearly spent; then King Indra gave the signal, the music ceased, and the thousand fairies left the hall. At the gateway the princess and her two companions seated themselves on the bed; the prince did the same. The prince looked: the lights had gone out, the palace had vanished, and the bed was descending through the air. The bed descended and descended, till it reached the earth and hung over the ruined well.

The Emerald fairy rose; she said, "Sisters, good-night," and sprang lightly down. The prince heard the water splash, he leaned over and saw it circling in rings, but the fairy had disappeared below the surface. The princess sang, the bed flew on, and stood above the river, and there the Rose fairy bade the princess adieu and vanished in the stream. The princess sang again,

the bed rose and descended on the terrace of the perfumer's house, before her chamber door. The princess arose and entered her chamber, the prince followed. The princess took off her dress of silver tissue, and the diamonds from her hair. She threw a shawl over her head, and exclaiming, "I am weary! I am weary!" she lay down on a sofa and fell asleep. The prince descended the stairs and passed through the doorway of the house. As the day began to dawn he reached the palace.

The prince sought his own apartment; he removed the silver ring from his finger and hid it in his bosom, then he summoned his attendants. The prince said that he was weary and would sleep again, and forbade that any should arouse him.

As the second watch of the day commenced,

the princess arrived at the palace ; she inquired for the prince ; the attendants said that he was sleeping, and must not be awakened. The princess waited : she waited one hour, she waited two hours, then she lost patience and entered the prince's chamber. The prince was lying on his sofa, a shawl was over his head. The princess called, and said, " Awake, my Lord ! Awake ! for the noon approaches," and as she spoke she drew the shawl from off him.

The prince started up, and seized his sword and made believe to draw it. Then seeing the princess he exclaimed, " If it had been another than you, my love, I would have struck and slain him, for arousing me from my delicious dream."

The princess said, " Was the dream so very pleasant ? Then tell it me."

The prince replied, " That if he told it, she

would be angry." The princess grew curious, and began to coax and to tease, and to promise not to be offended. She coaxed and teased till at length the prince yielded; he made her sit beside him on the couch, and thus commenced his story:—

"Last night," the prince said, "in my sleep I seemed to follow you when you left the palace, and it seemed to me that I had become invisible, for the guards at the gate did not salute, nor the people in the street make way, and when I entered the house after you, neither did your mother appear to perceive me."

As the prince said this, the princess moved and started.

The prince continued, "Then I thought in my dream, that your mother placed before you a dish of rice and lentils, and that while you ate

I reached over and helped myself. Then it seemed that you went to your chamber and that I followed, and that you took off your seven veils, one by one."

Here the princess rose and laid aside her outer veil.

The prince went on, "And then I thought that you arrayed yourself in a robe of silver tissue, and put diamonds in your hair, and sat on a bed on the terrace, and that I placed myself beside you, and that you sang, and as you sang, the bed rose and flew away to the river."

Here the princess stood up, and drew off her second veil.

The prince continued, and related how the Rose fairy had risen from the river and the Emerald fairy from the well, and how they had

gone to the garden in the forest, and from thence to the milky way and the palace of King Indra, and how the princess had danced among the thousand fairies, and how, as the morn approached, the palace had vanished and the princess had returned to her home. In short, under the guise of a dream, the prince described all he had seen. As the prince proceeded in his story, from time to time the princess arose and laid aside another and another of her veils, till as the story ended but one remained.

Then the princess said, "My Lord! now tell me true, was this a dream or did you see it?"

The prince made no reply.

The princess asked again, and now her voice was angry. The prince was frightened; he thought that if he offended her, perhaps on the



"As she spoke, she rose from the terrace, and floated upwards."
—Page 47.

morrow she might not return. In his fear the prince forgot his promise and the Fukkeer's warning, and told the princess how he had obtained the silver ring and had really seen her. Then he said, "And now lift your veil, my love, that I may behold your face again." The princess said, "First give me the ring." The prince answered, "No, first lift your veil." And so they disputed, and all the while the princess was walking towards the window.

The princess reached the window, and stepped through it to the terrace. Then she turned and said, "For the last time, give me the ring." The prince answered as before, "First, my love, let me see your face." The princess lifted her veil, and said, "Yes! you shall see my face now, and never again." And as she spoke, she rose from the terrace, and floated upwards. The

prince ran to seize her, but she was already above the palace towers; as he gazed, she vanished in the clouds and the sky. The prince uttered a cry of despair, and fell fainting to the ground.





PART THE SECOND.

AT the prince's cry, the attendants ran in and found the prince lying senseless on the terrace. They sprinkled his face with water, and laid him on his couch. When he came to himself, they sent for the king and queen.

When the king and queen learnt what had occurred, they summoned the perfumer. But the perfumer knew nothing of his daughter, he could only suppose that she might have alighted in some forest or waste. The king sent mes-

sengers and horsemen, and searched the wastes and the forests, but no trace of the princess could they find.

When a month had passed, the prince began to pine: he ceased to hunt, he ceased almost to speak, he passed the days in sighing and in tears. Next he fell ill, and it seemed as if he was about to die. The king and the queen mourned and grieved, and all the court was sad, and saddest of the court was the prince's companion, the chief minister's son.

When the minister's son perceived that the physicians did the prince no good, but rather that the prince grew worse and worse, then he resolved to go to the river, and consult again the Fukkeer. The Fukkeer was sitting as before, in the circle of fire. As the minister's son told his story, the Fukkeer listened and sighed. Then

he said, "The beasts of the forest obey me, and the spirits of the lower air, but over the fairies Raja Indra alone has power, only he can restore the princess."

The minister's son answered, "And who can influence Raja Indra?"

The Fukkeer said, "In the mountains lives the Great Master. For six months he sleeps, for six months he remains awake and practises austerities: he can influence King Indra."

The chief minister's son returned and told the prince, and said that he would repair to the mountains, and seek for the Great Master. But the prince answered that he would go himself. So the prince took gold and jewels and hid them about his person, and bade farewell to the king and the queen, and then he mounted his horse and set out for the mountains.

The prince rode through the wastes and through the forests; at length he arrived at the mountains. The mountains were so high that they seemed to touch the heavens, and they were full of rocks and torrents and precipices. At the foot of the mountains the prince got off his horse: he said, "Horse! Horse! eat the grass and drink the water, and wait here till I return."

The prince wandered among the mountains a month, he wandered for two months; the rain fell, and the clouds thundered: at the end of two months he came to a cave. At the end of the cave a lamp was burning, and by it, on a bed of leaves, an aged man was lying asleep. The prince lifted his eyes and gave thanks; for he said, "I have found the Great Master!"

The prince remained in the cave. He made a brush of twigs, and every morning he swept the

floor, and prepared food for the Master when he should awake. After ten days the six months expired and the Master awoke; he found the cave swept and clean and the food ready, and a young man standing to receive his orders. The prince continued to attend on the Master. He swept the cave and prepared the food, and when the Master ate the prince stood behind and fanned away the flies.

At the end of three months the Master addressed the prince and said, "My son! ask a boon of me, and I will grant it."

The prince said, "Holy father! restore me the princess my wife!" and then he related to the Master his story, and how the princess had left him.

When the prince had concluded his story, the Master said, "At the full of the moon

fairies will come and bathe in the lake by the ruined palace, a thousand leagues away; we must go thither and wait." Then the Master raised his staff, and bade the prince take hold of the end. The Master walked in front, the prince followed after. Before the sun set they arrived at the lake. The prince cut down branches and young saplings and built a hut in the forest and roofed it with grass and reeds, and the prince and the Master dwelt in the hut till it came to the full of the moon.

On the day of the full moon, the Master addressed the prince and said, "At midnight the princess and the thousand fairies will come and bathe in the lake before the ruined palace, but first they will lay their shawls on the terrace."

Then he bade the prince repair to the palace and hide among the ruins, and watch where the

princess placed her shawl, and steal it away as she bathed, and bring it back to the hut. The Master told the prince not to fear though the fairies followed and threatened ; “ but,” he said, “ for your life do not stop nor turn, nor restore the princess her shawl.”

The prince promised obedience, and when the night arrived he repaired to the palace and hid among the ruins. The moon rose and began to ascend the sky—the moon ascended higher and higher till it reached the zenith—then there came a sound of rushing in the air ; the prince looked, and saw that the thousand fairies were descending from the sky.

The fairies alighted on the terrace, and laid aside their shawls ; then they plunged into the lake, and disported themselves like the swans or the wild fowl : they swam, they dived, they

splashed the water on each other. Meanwhile the prince crept softly up and stole the princess's shawl away.

The fairies disported themselves in the lake till the moon began to wane, then they returned to the terrace, and each fairy sought her shawl, for without their shawls the fairies could not fly. But the princess could not find her shawl. She searched here, and she searched there, and all the while the fairies were calling, "Haste! sister, haste! for the night passes and the king awaits us."

The princess wrung her hands and cried, "Help me! sisters, help me! for some one has taken my shawl away!" The thousand fairies commenced to search. Presently one exclaimed, "A mortal has been here: see here are his footprints. It is he that has taken our sister's

shawl away." And the thousand fairies started in pursuit.

The prince had not got but half-way through the forest when he heard behind him a rushing sound, and then the voices of the fairies calling on him to stop. But the prince only ran the faster. The fairies drew nearer; first they threatened, then they begged; then came the voice of the princess weeping and imploring. She cried and said, "My lord! my love! oh, stop and turn but once, and I will follow and be your slave for ever." The prince's heart was touched, he forgot his promise and the Master's warnings: he stopped and turned. The princess said, "Give me my shawl." The prince replied, "But if I give it, will you follow me?" The princess answered as before, "I will follow and be your slave for ever."

The prince held out the shawl; the princess took it, and as she took it she touched the prince's hand. At her touch the flames as of a thousand fires darted through him. The prince sank on the ground a heap of ashes, and the princess and the thousand fairies, laughing, floated upwards to the skies.

As the night passed and the prince did not return the Master became anxious: he mistrusted that the prince had forgotten his warnings, and had stopped and turned. Presently the Master took his staff and set out for the lake. As he went, he looked on this side and on that side till he perceived the heap of ashes, and then he knew what had occurred. The Master approached the heap and touched it with his staff, and uttered the words of a spell. And at the touch and the words, the prince rose up, well and whole as before.

The prince implored forgiveness, and that another trial might be permitted him. The Master consented, and they returned together to the hut, and waited there for the next full moon. When the day of the full moon at length arrived, the Master bade the prince go again to the palace, and hide in the ruins as before.

But the Master warned the prince that another trial would not be given him. "If now," the Master said, "you turn and look, my power cannot avail, and the princess will be lost to you for ever." The prince promised obedience and departed, and concealed himself in the ruins, and watched and waited. At midnight there came again the rushing sound, the fairies descended on the terrace, and laid aside their shawls, and plunged into the lake as before. The prince watched his opportunity, and while the fairies were disporting in

the water, he crept out, and stole the princess's shawl away.

The prince ran and ran, but he had not passed the forest, when he heard the fairies in pursuit. They called and threatened, and they coaxed and entreated, and the princess wept, and promised, and implored. But the prince only stopped his ears and ran the faster. The prince pressed on till he reached the hut. As he crossed the threshold the fairies stopped, for within they dared not enter.

The fairies stood around the hut, and entreated for the shawl. They entreated and they begged. In the end they promised to yield the princess if only, among them, the prince could find her. The prince was overjoyed, but the Master warned him that his hardest task was now before him. The Master said, "The fairies will change

their appearances. "What form the princess would assume," the Master said, that he could not tell, only this he knew, that "around her neck there would be a slender thread of gold."

Then the Master warned the prince again, and told him that whosoever of the fairies he now chose would be his for ever. If he failed to choose the princess, no power on earth or in heaven, not even Raja Indra himself, could restore her.

When the Master had finished speaking, he bade the fairies sit down in rows, and the prince stepped forth to select his bride. The prince passed along the first row: the fairies were lovely as the flowers, but the princess was not among them, nor was she in the second row, nor in the third, nor in the fourth. The prince passed row after row; when he reached the last row, his heart

began to sink. At the end was a negress; she had thick lips and woolly hair, and her skin was wrinkled like an elephant's. She sat with her head bent, and a coarse shawl thrown over her. The prince bade her lift her shawl. As she moved, in the creases of her neck, there seemed a glimmer: the prince looked, and saw the thread of gold! As he saw it he exclaimed, "This is my choice and the bride I select." Then he returned towards the hut, and the negress followed him. The fairies came after, laughing and jeering: then they pretended compassion, and offered the prince that he might choose again.

The prince reached the hut. He crossed the threshold; the negress did the same. The prince turned and looked: the negress had vanished, and in her place, all blushing and with downcast eyes, the princess stood before him! The prince

opened his arms to embrace her, but the Master drew him back, and warned him that the princess was still a fairy, and to touch her, for a mortal, was to die.

The Master bade the princess seat herself apart, and then he delivered the shawl to the fairies, and, with wailings and sad lamentations, they flew away to the clouds and the sky.

When the sun had risen, the Master spread his carpet before the hut, and sat himself on it and placed the prince and the princess on either side. Then the Master ordered, and the carpet rose, and flew till it reached the milky way and the palace of King Indra. King Indra was reposing in his chamber. The Master entered with the prince: the princess he left without.

At the Master's entrance King Indra rose, and bowed his head, and asked the Master's pleasure.

The Master said, "This, my disciple, is a prince, the son of one of the kings of the earth, and desires a fairy for his bride."

King Indra spoke the words that call the fairies. At the summons they left the mountains and the rivers, the forests and the ruined wells. In the space of half-an-hour, they were assembled before the throne. Then King Indra said, "The thousand fairies are assembled: let the prince select his bride." But the Master said, "King Indra! one is absent," and as he spoke he called, and the princess entered. At the sight of the princess, King Indra's brow was clouded, for above all the thousand fairies it was she that King Indra loved.

The king made no sign, and sat silent on his throne. Then the Master drew forth the wand that the prince had stolen, and said, "King

Indra ! grant the prince his boon, and receive again your wand." King Indra cast down his eyes, and thought and sighed: then he said, "Great Master, I consent; restore the wand," for without his wand King Indra could not rule the storms.

The Master gave the wand. King Indra signed the princess to approach. With the wand he touched her shoulders and her hair. At the touch her wings fell off, and with them her fairy power departed; she became again a mortal, and a mortal might touch her and live, but, by the favour of King Indra, her fairy beauty remained.

The Master then bade King Indra farewell, and seated himself again on the carpet, and the prince and the princess sat beside him, and the Master ordered, and the carpet flew and conveyed them all to the palace of the king, the prince's father.

At the news of the prince's return, the king and the queen came forth and embraced their son and his bride, and marvelled at her beauty. Throughout the whole palace there were rejoicings, and at night the city was illuminated. To the prince and princess were born sons and daughters, and when the king died, the prince succeeded him on the throne. Also, the son of the chief minister became minister in his father's room.

The prince brought back his horse from the forest, and built him a stable of marble and a silver manger. But though many kings and nobles sought for him, the Great Master was not seen on earth again.



THE PRINCESS WITH GOLDEN HAIR.

LNA certain city there once lived a merchant; when he was about forty years of age, a son was born to him. Soon after, he set out on a journey, and it happened that as he passed through a desert, he was attacked by robbers and slain, and his goods plundered. But one of his servants escaped, and brought the news to his wife.

When the merchant's wife learnt that her husband was dead, she put off her jewels and ornaments, and mourned for a period of forty

days. Then she commenced to look after her affairs, and to busy herself in the education of her son.

When her son came to be eighteen years old, his mother desired that he should choose some occupation, and she advised him that he should enter into the service of the king. But the young man replied, that he would not enter into the king's service, or choose any other occupation, but only he would be like his father, a merchant of the sea. His mother tried to dissuade him, for she feared that on his journeys some evil would befall him ; when, however, she found him determined, she gave him her blessing and eighty pieces of gold.

The young man took the eighty pieces. With ten of the pieces he bought a horse and saddle, ten more he expended on a sword and dagger ; the

remainder he put aside for trade and the expenses of the journey. Then he bade his mother farewell, and set out for the sea. The young man rode on his horse, and his servant ran behind him, and so they went on and on, till at length they arrived at the sea-shore. On one side were the tents of the merchants, and on the other side were the huts of the divers. The young man unsaddled his horse, and remained for the night among the merchants.

In the morning, the divers came near and inquired if any of the merchants would employ them. The merchants inquired the charge. The divers answered, that the wind was high and the waves were rough, therefore they could not dive for less than a hundred pieces of gold. But none of the merchants were willing to give this sum, and so the divers returned to their huts.

The next morning the divers came again, and when the merchants inquired their charge, they replied, that the wind had fallen and the sea was calm, and so they would dive for fifty pieces of gold. On this, many of the merchants gave the divers the gold, and desired them to dive for them. But none of the divers found any treasure. One brought up a stick and another a stone, the rest only mud or shells. On this the merchants became discouraged, and returned to their tents.

But the young man thought that now was his opportunity. As the other merchants had failed perhaps he might succeed. So he gave one of the divers his fifty pieces of gold, and desired that he should dive for him. The diver rowed out three furlongs from the shore, and leaped into the sea. He remained under the water for one minute,

when he came up he had in his hand a green parrot.

When the young man saw the parrot he was in despair, but the divers consoled him. They told him that this was not a common parrot, but a parrot of the sea, and would certainly, in due time, bring its possessor some good fortune. So the young man bought a cage for the parrot ; then he mounted his horse, his servant ran behind him, and he returned home to his mother.

His mother was overjoyed at his return. But when she found that he had brought home only a green parrot, she was much disappointed. However she hung up the cage on a hook, and every day she gave the parrot seed and water.

After six months had passed, the young man desired to try his fortune once more. His mother endeavoured to dissuade him, but when she found

him determined, she gave him eighty pieces of gold as before, and he set out for the sea. The young man rode on his horse and his servant ran behind him, and at length they arrived at the sea-shore. The merchants were in their tents, and the divers in their huts, and the young man remained the night among the merchants.

In the morning the divers presented themselves and offered to dive. First they asked a hundred pieces of gold, next they asked fifty pieces, and then the merchants began to employ them. But none found anything save mud or stones. The young man thought again, that now was his opportunity, so he gave his fifty pieces of gold, and desired one of the divers to dive for him.

The diver rowed out two furlongs, and remained under the water for two minutes; when he appeared on the surface, he had in his hand

a white cat. The young man was furious and would have flung the cat back into the sea, but the divers restrained him. They told him that this was a cat of the sea, and was certain to bring him good fortune. So the young man took the cat, and mounted his horse and returned home to his mother.

His mother embraced him and wept for joy at his return, but at the sight of the cat she was much disappointed. However, she gave it bread to eat and milk to drink, and it remained in the house with the parrot.

After six months more had passed, the young man desired to go again to the sea. When his mother could not dissuade him, she gave him eighty more pieces of gold, and he mounted his horse and departed. But when he arrived at the shore, the season of storms had commenced, and

the merchants had left, and the divers remained in their huts.

The wind blew for forty days, then there came a calm, and the divers came out of their huts, and offered to dive. The young man gave his fifty pieces of gold, and one of the divers rowed out one furlong and dived. The diver remained under the water for three minutes, when he came up he had in his hand an iron pot; on the mouth of the pot there was a cover, and the cover was fastened and sealed.

The young man was eager to break the seal, but the divers restrained him. They told him that he should break the seal only in his own house, for within the pot there might be a talisman; so the young man gave the pot to his servant to carry, and mounted his horse and returned home.

When the young man reached home, it happened that his mother was absent, for she had gone to the market. The young man placed the pot on the floor, and went to seek for her. While he was seeking his mother returned. She saw on the floor an iron pot, she drew near and perceived that it was tied and sealed. As she looked she became curious, she broke the seal and lifted the cover, then she screamed and fainted, for within the pot she beheld, lying coiled, a black snake!

The young man sought for his mother in the market, and he sought for her through the streets. When he could not find her, he returned home. He entered, and there was his mother lying fainting; the iron pot was open, and out of it had risen a black snake. The snake was moving its head, and hissing and darting its tongue. But at

the sight of the young man, it sank down into the pot.

The young man ran and put on the cover and fastened it, and then he attended to his mother. He lifted her up, and sprinkled water on her face ; presently, she came to herself, and told him all that had happened, and they consulted what they should do with the snake. The young man proposed to kill it, but his mother forbade him, for she said that the snake had done them no harm. So they decided to let it loose in the forest.

Next morning, the young man rose early ; he took the pot in his arm, and went away to the forest ; he put the pot on the ground, took off the cover, and set out on his return. He had not gone far when he heard behind him a hissing. He looked back and saw that the snake was pursuing him ; he was seized with terror, and fled.

The young man ran, the snake followed; but presently, the young man's foot caught in a root, he stumbled and fell, and the snake glided up and stood over him.

When the young man beheld the snake standing over him, he thought that his last hour had arrived. But the snake, instead of hurting him, opened its mouth and addressed him.

The snake first blessed the young man, and called him his preserver; then it related to him its story. The snake said, that he was the brother of Raja Bashtub, the king of the serpents, and that a thousand years ago a Jin had seized him and cast him into the ocean, and now he desired to return to his own country. But the snake said that he could not return alone for fear of the Jin, so he prayed the young man to accompany him.

The young man agreed, and they set off together. The snake went in front to show the way, the young man followed; at midnight he slept, and the snake kept guard. If robbers approached or wild beasts came near, the snake raised himself and hissed, and at the sound of the hiss, the robbers fled, and the wild beasts scampered away in terror. Thus they went on and on, till at length they came near the dominions of Raja Bashtub, the king of snakes.

There the snakes began to abound: there were black snakes and blue, and green snakes and yellow. When the young man saw how their eyes glistened and their tongues darted, and the venom dropped from their jaws, his heart failed him, and he felt faint with apprehension. But the snake bade him take courage, for while he was with him they dare not harm him.

As they went on, the snakes became more and more; at length they lay so thick that they almost concealed the ground, and the young man had to pick his way to avoid them. Next, they saw flying dragons in the air, and then they arrived at the palace of King Bashtub.

King Bashtub had the head and hands of a man, but his body was that of a serpent. At the sight of his brother, he rose from his throne and embraced him. When he had heard his brother's adventures he swore vengeance against the Jin, but to the young man he declared his gratitude and entertained him for forty days.

At the end of the forty days, the snake addressed the young man in private and said, "Tomorrow my brother the king will give you leave to depart, and he will offer you great presents,

but accept nothing, only the copper ring that he wears on his left hand."

In the morning the king sent for the young man and bade him farewell, and desired that he should ask of him a gift. The king promised to give him whatever he should wish for, gold or jewels, or aught else, even to the half of his kingdom. But the young man answered as the snake had instructed him: he said that he desired nothing, only the copper ring that the king wore on his finger.

When the young man had spoken the king sighed deeply; nevertheless, on account of his promise, he gave the ring. Then the king sent for a flying dragon. The young man mounted the dragon, and the dragon carried him through the air beyond the region of the serpents, and set him down at the confines of the king's dominions.

Then the dragon returned to King Bashtub, and the young man proceeded on his way.

As he went he began to regret that he had chosen the ring. He thought to himself that he might have taken home gold and jewels, as much as he liked, but now he should return as poor as he left. As he thus reflected he heard a rustle in the grass, and the snake, King Bashtub's brother, appeared before him. The snake bade him not to regret his choice, and then the snake explained to him the virtues of the ring. The snake told him, that whatever he touched with the ring in the name of King Bashtub would turn to gold. When the snake had said this, he glided into a bush and disappeared, and the young man continued his journey.

The young man went on and on, till at length he came to a great city. Before he entered he

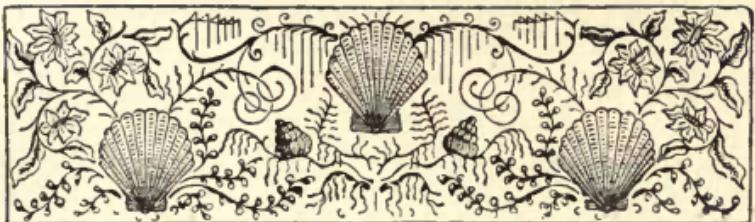
made trial of his ring. He picked up a stone and rubbed it, and as he rubbed he uttered the words the snake had taught him: "Ring! ring! obey the orders of Raja Bashtub, the king of the snakes, and turn this stone to gold." As the young man spoke and rubbed, the stone became yellower and yellower, and heavier and heavier. In the space of a minute it was changed into a lump of gold. The young man hid the lump of gold in his girdle, and went on to the city; he passed through the gates and put up in the caravanserai. While his dinner was preparing, he sat down under a tree that grew in the court-yard.

As the young man sat under the tree, he heard a bird chirp in the branches; he looked up and saw a drum suspended, and by it a stick. The young man called to the woman that waited on the travellers, and inquired of her what the drum

meant, and why it was hung there. The woman answered that the drum was hung there, that any might strike it that desired to marry the king's daughter. But whoever struck the drum must make the princess a palace of gold, otherwise he would be put to death. On that account no one ventured to strike the drum.

The young man waited till it was dark, then he went out to the princess's palace, and rubbed the ring against the walls, and said, "Ring! ring! obey the orders of King Bashtub, and turn this palace all to gold." Immediately the walls began to get yellow, and soon the palace was changed to gold. When the young man saw that the palace was turned to gold, he went back to the caravanserai and lay down and pretended to sleep. But in the middle of the night he rose and reached the stick and struck the drum. The

noise resounded through all the city, it even reached to the king's chamber. In the morning when the king awoke and made inquiry, he found that the drum had sounded in the night time, and that the palace of the princess was turned to gold. The king sent his guards to the caravanserai. When he discovered that the young man had struck the drum, he had him clothed in royal attire and brought to the palace. The king approved of the young man, and the princess fell in love with him, and so as soon as the preparations could be completed the wedding of the young man and the princess was solemnised with great magnificence. The king bestowed on the young man the title of prince, and also appointed him heir to his dominions.



PART THE SECOND.

WHEN the prince had been married six months, one day he went a hunting. On his return he was tired and lay down and slept, and the princess sat beside him and fanned away the flies. And so it happened, that as the princess sat and fanned, her hair became unfastened, and some of it fell down and rested on the prince's hand and touched the magic ring.

Now as the prince slept he dreamt, and in his dream he seemed to be again approaching the

city, and to be trying on the stone the virtue of the ring, and as he thus thought, he whispered in his sleep the words of the charm. As he whispered, the princess felt her hair become heavy ; she looked, and it was turned to gold.

The princess was frightened, and cried out. At her cry the prince awoke, and to console the princess—for she thought herself bewitched—he told her his story, and the secret of the ring. The princess was comforted, and in time she became proud of her golden hair ; but she kept it concealed by a veil, and suffered no one but only her nurse to dress or to comb it.

And so it came to pass that one day, as the princess sat in her balcony and the nurse combed the princess's hair, that a single hair broke off and fell into the stream below. The hair lighted on a twig and twined itself around it, and the

current swept them both away. The current carried them on and on, past the cities, and past the towns, to the palace of another king a thousand leagues beyond.

As the twig floated by the palace, it happened that the king's son was fishing in the river. He drew in his line, and on it was a broken twig, and twined around the twig was a single golden hair. The prince gazed at the hair and wondered whose it could be; then he pictured the lady in his mind, and with the picture he fell in love, and for love he began to sicken and to pine.

The king and queen grew anxious, and summoned the physicians. The physicians came and prescribed, but their remedies did the prince no good. Then the king became more anxious, and sent for a wise woman. The wise woman saw the prince, and said, "The prince is ill for love

of the lady with the golden hair, and till he sees her he will not recover."

The king desired the wise woman to discover who the lady was to whom the hair belonged, and where she resided. The wise woman went home, and made an image of clay and placed the golden hair before it and performed incantations. At midnight the image began to speak. The woman said, "Image! Image! tell me whose hair is this?"

The image answered, "It is the hair of a princess."

The woman asked again, "Image! Image! where does the princess live?"

The image replied: "The princess lives in a golden palace, up the river, a thousand leagues away."

In the morning the wise woman presented

herself before the king and said, "I will find, and bring the lady with the golden hair, but I must have a boat of ebony, shaped and hollowed by fire."

The king gave the order, and the carpenters went to the forest, and cut down a tree of ebony, and hollowed and shaped it with fire.

Then the wise woman said, "I must have the blood and fat of a tiger that has not left its mother."

The king told the huntsmen, and they took bows and arrows and went to the jungle, and shot a young tiger that had not left its mother, and brought back the blood and fat. The wise woman took the blood and fat, and smeared the boat of ebony from stem to stern. Then the wise woman asked for a bottle of water from the king's well, and for two loaves of bread from the

king's kitchen. She took the loaves, and the bottle of water, and clothed herself in a nurse's dress, and sat in the boat and began to sing.

As the wise woman sang, the boat began to move, faster and faster, up the stream and up the stream. When the morning dawned, it came in sight of the golden palace. Then the wise woman ceased to sing, the boat drifted to the shore, and the woman hid it among the reeds.

The woman remained all day among the reeds; she ate of the loaves and drank of the water. At night she went to the palace, and sat below the princess's chamber, and made lamentation. In the morning the princess inquired who it was that had wept all night below her chamber. The attendants asked, and informed the princess that it was a nurse from the north, and she wept

because her husband had been killed by robbers and all her goods plundered.

The princess took compassion on the woman, and sent for her and made her one of her attendants. In the end the woman became a favourite, and the princess confided to her the secret of the ring and of her golden hair.

And so it happened one day, that the prince had gone again to the chase, and lest he should lose the ring in the forest he placed it on the princess's finger, and charged her not to leave the palace. So the princess sat in her balcony and the nurse sat beside her, and presently the nurse began to sing, and as the nurse sang, the boat came out from among the reeds, and floated and stood below the princess's chamber. The princess looked down, and there was a boat of ebony below her in the river.

The princess desired to enter the boat, only she feared that the prince might hear and be displeased. But the nurse persuaded her. The nurse said: "My lady! It is noon-time, and the guards are all asleep. We can go and see the fishes swim, and return before the guards awaken."

So the princess arose, and went down the secret stairs, and the boat drifted to the terrace. The nurse and the princess entered the boat; the nurse sat in front and paddled, the princess sat behind and dabbled her hands in the water, and watched the fishes as they swam.

Presently, the princess looked up, and the boat was passing the reeds. The princess called to the nurse, "Nurse! Nurse! See, we are passing the reeds: let us return, or the guards will wake and see us." But the nurse only answered, "The



"Nurse! Nurse! See, we are passing the reeds."—Page 92.

guards will not wake yet awhile: let us go on, and see the water-lilies." So they paddled past the reeds.

Presently the princess called out again, "Nurse! Nurse! See, we are passing the water-lilies. Let us return, or the guards will awake and see us." But the nurse only answered, "The guards will not awaken yet awhile: let us go on and see the water-fowl." So they paddled on towards the water-fowl. But when the princess looked up again, the palace was out of sight, and the nurse was singing, and the boat was flying through the water like the wind. The princess threatened; then she wept and entreated, but the nurse paid no heed. The nurse sang, and the boat flew on and on. When the morning dawned, it reached the palace of the king a thousand leagues away.

The king's son, when he beheld the princess,

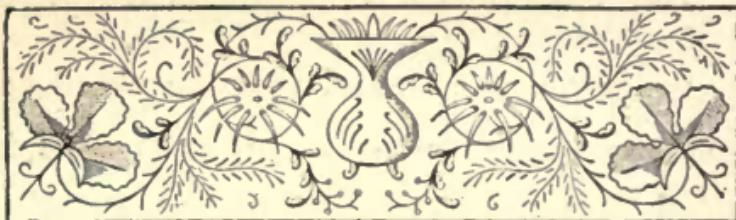
was overwhelmed with joy; but the king his father, when he had heard her story, was greatly perplexed, for the nurse said: "The princess is not really married: she makes pretence, that she may be sent home to her parents." In the end the king sent a messenger to ascertain the truth, and if the princess was really married or not. Meanwhile the king kept the princess secluded in a garden, and he appointed the nurse, the wise woman, to attend on her. But while the princess slept, the wise woman stole the ring away.

When the prince returned from the chase, and found the princess gone, he summoned all his attendants, and searched the palace from end to end, and the gardens and all the country round, but no trace or tidings of the princess could he obtain. The prince searched for a week, he

searched for a month, and then he abandoned himself to despair: he put off his royal robes, he clothed himself in sackcloth, he sat the live-long day with downcast eyes, lamenting for his vanished bride.

So here we have the messenger crossing the hills and the plains, and the princess grieving in her garden, and the prince mourning in his golden palace. And now we must return to the widow, the prince's mother, and the cat, and the parrot.





PART THE THIRD.

AS the day went by, and her son did not return, the widow became anxious: so at night the cat went out to inquire. The cat asked the jackals, and the jackals searched the forest, but the young man was not in the forest.

Then the widow thought that perhaps he had gone again to the sea, and would return in six months as before. But six months passed, and her son did not come back. Then the widow opened the door of the parrot's cage, and the

parrot came out, and he and the cat set off to search for their master. The parrot flew through the air, and looked to the right and the left, the cat ran on the ground and examined the grass and the thickets. At night the parrot rested on a tree, and the cat kept guard; and so they went on and on, till at length they came to the golden palace.

At the sight of the palace, the parrot exclaimed, "I have been in the East, and I have been in the West, but a palace of gold never yet have I seen."

The parrot desired that they should enter the palace, but the cat was prudent and cautious. She told the parrot first to fly over, and see that all was safe. So the cat hid in the field, and the parrot flew over the palace wall. The parrot flew over the walls and over the roofs, and lighted

down on a tree in a courtyard. Below the tree, a young man was seated. He was clothed in sackcloth, he kept his head bent, and wept, and lamented. Presently the parrot spoke; the young man looked up, and the parrot saw that it was his master, the widow's son.

The parrot flew back to the field, and told the cat; but the cat was prudent and cautious; she bade the parrot return and make sure, and then, the cat said, she would enter the palace.

The next morning the parrot perched again on the tree, and began to talk, and the young man looked up as before. The parrot hopped lower and lower, from one branch to another. The young man called to it, but the parrot answered that he went only to his master, never to strangers. In turn, the young man inquired who was his master, and the parrot asked the young

man why he wore sackcloth and sat all day below the tree lamenting?

To make a long story short, by dint of question and answer, the parrot learnt all the young man's story, and made sure that he was his master. Then the parrot returned to the field, and brought the cat, and the parrot and the cat disclosed themselves to the prince, and they all three consulted how they might find and recover the princess. The cat said that she would ask the foxes and the jackals. If the princess had gone by land they would have seen her. But the princess had not gone by land. Then the parrot said that he would inquire of the birds and the bats. If the princess had been carried away through the air, they would know of it. But the princess had not been carried through the air.

Then the cat and the parrot said that the princess must have gone by the water, and they told the prince that they would follow the river to the sea and find her. The prince wrote a letter, and tied it to the parrot's wing, and the parrot and the cat bade the prince farewell, and set off to seek for the princess along the river.

The parrot flew all day in the air, and looked into every house and garden. At night the cat kept guard while the parrot slept, and so they went on and on, till at length they arrived at the garden where the princess was kept confined.

The parrot perched on a tree, and began to talk: the princess looked up and saw a green parrot, and a letter tied beneath his wing. The princess called the parrot: the parrot came near, and the princess unfastened the letter. When the princess had read the letter, she wept for joy.



"The princess called the parrot."—*Page 102.*

She wrote an answer, and bade the parrot fly away and never rest, till he had delivered it to the prince in the golden palace.

The parrot asked for the ring as a token, and then the princess related how the nurse had stolen it. The parrot told the cat, and the cat desired the parrot to watch and observe where the woman hid it. The parrot watched all day. At night he saw the woman take the ring from her bosom, and hide it in her mouth while she slept.

Next day the cat concealed herself. At night, when the wise woman slept, the cat jumped out and scratched her face. The woman screamed, and as she screamed she dropped the ring. The parrot seized it, and rose in the air, and flew and flew, till he reached the golden palace, and there he delivered the letter and the ring to the prince.

When the prince learnt that the princess was alive, and in safety, he was overwhelmed with joy. He rose up from beneath the tree and put off his sackcloth dress, and arrayed himself again in his royal robes. Next he assembled a great army and set out to bring home the princess.

The army marched and marched, one day five leagues, one day four leagues, and so, marching and marching, it at length drew near to the city of the king and his son.

When the king heard of the approach of the army, he was alarmed, and delivered up the princess, and advanced to meet the prince with gifts and many excuses. When the prince had heard the whole story, and the princess entreated him, he forgave the king and also his son; but the wise woman he took with him and cast into a dungeon.

As soon as the army had rested, the prince set out again and returned to his own dominions. At the arrival of the prince and princess there were great rejoicings. When the rejoicings were concluded, the prince sent for his mother, and assigned her apartments in the golden palace, and there she continued to reside with the cat and the parrot.





THE MAGIC HORSE.

IN a certain city there once lived a goldsmith, and near him, in the same street, there also resided a carpenter. The two were always quarrelling. At length their disputes arrived at such a height, that the neighbours assembled, and made a complaint to the king. The king sent for the goldsmith and carpenter, and inquired the cause of their contention.

The goldsmith replied: "May it please your Majesty! every one knows that I am the

most skilful workman in the land; nevertheless this carpenter pretends to be my superior: on this account we dispute." But the carpenter answered, "Your Majesty! this goldsmith is not speaking the truth: it is notorious that in workmanship he is altogether my inferior." And the two began to wrangle even before the king.

The king said that the dispute could be easily settled. Each of the men should prepare a specimen of his handiwork, and bring it to the palace, and whosoever's workmanship should be found superior, to him should be adjudged the priority.

Then the king inquired, in how long their specimens would be ready? The goldsmith replied that he had long been employed on a work that should display his skilfulness. In the space of four weeks it would be completed. The

carpenter answered to the like effect. So the king directed that on that day month they should present themselves again before him, with the proofs of their skill. In the meantime, he desired them to return to their homes, and abstain from quarrelling.

When the month had expired, the goldsmith and carpenter appeared at the palace. The goldsmith had in his hand a small box, the carpenter carried a large bundle. The king first addressed the goldsmith, and desired him to exhibit what he had brought; but the goldsmith begged that he might be permitted to display his handiwork in some place where there was water, for it was only in the water, he said, that its excellences would be apparent.

The king assented, and adjourned with his courtiers to the garden. In the centre of the

garden there was a large marble basin full of water. The king and his courtiers stood by the basin; the goldsmith advanced, and opened his box, and drew from it a little fish. The body of the fish was of silver, the tail and the fins were of gold, and ornamented with jewels.

At the sight of the fish all the courtiers exclaimed, so exquisite a piece of workmanship they had never beheld. But the goldsmith said that the appearance of the fish was nothing: his skill would be seen in its performances. So saying, he came forward to the edge of the basin and stooped, and let the fish slip gently into the water.

As soon as the fish was in the water, it commenced to move its fins and its tail, and to swim and to dive, and to dart at the flies, and to eat the crumbs of bread that the goldsmith threw it.

In short, it behaved itself in every way as if it was a real fish. When it had gambolled in the water for some time, it swam back to the edge of the basin, and the goldsmith lifted it up and returned it to the box.

Then the king turned to the carpenter, and desired him to open his bundle, that the results of his handiwork might also be seen. But the carpenter replied that what he had made could not be properly exhibited in the garden, for it required a large open space for its display.

On this, the king called for his travelling throne, and had himself conveyed to the great square in front of the palace. The king sat on his throne in the centre of one side of the square, his courtiers stood around him, and on the other three sides the people of the city arranged themselves. Then the carpenter advanced before the

throne and opened his bundle. The courtiers murmured with disappointment, for the bundle contained only pieces of wood and brass, a velvet saddle, and a bridle. The carpenter begged them to be patient till he had put the pieces together. Then he joined the pieces, and there stood before the king the perfect image of a horse. The carpenter placed the velvet saddle on the horse's back, and put the bit in its mouth. Then he stroked the horse's neck, and patted its head, and took hold of its bridle, and the horse began to move and to walk, like a living horse.

The carpenter led the horse round the square and halted him again before the throne, and inquired if any of the courtiers or of the people would mount the horse, so that its further excellences might be displayed? But none of the courtiers, nor of the people, nor of the king's

guards would venture to place themselves on such a horse. The king's son was standing by the throne. When he saw that no one else would mount the horse he ran forward, and before the king could stop him he had vaulted into the saddle. The prince rode once round the square: the horse trotted and cantered; the prince rode twice round the square: the horse pranced and curvetted; next it arched its neck and shook its head, and commenced to champ its bit and to rear.

When the carpenter perceived that the horse had begun to rear and to champ its bit, he ran forward and begged the prince to dismount, for the horse, he said, was becoming excited, and might cast him off, or fly away with him into the air. But the prince only laughed. Then the carpenter threw himself before the throne, and

besought the king that he would desire the prince to cease riding, or some evil might befall him.

The king was alarmed, and called to the prince to dismount; but the prince replied that he would first ride once again round the square, and as he spoke he jerked the bridle, and pressed his heels against the horse's sides. No sooner had the prince's heels touched the horse's sides than the horse gave a snort and a bound. The carpenter rushed forward, but before he could seize the bridle, the horse had sprung upwards and was flying through the air. The horse flew up and up, till it looked no bigger than a ball, then it seemed a speck, and then it vanished out of sight altogether.

As the horse flew away with the prince, the courtiers, and all the people, shouted with terror.

As for the king, he groaned and wept, and rent his garments, in grief and despair.

The carpenter endeavoured to comfort the king. He assured him that the horse would presently become fatigued and descend, and that the prince, in the course of a few days, would return in safety. But days passed, and the prince did not come back, and though the king sent letters and messengers in all directions, no tidings whatever could he obtain of the prince or of the horse. When a month had gone by, the king and the queen abandoned hope, and mourned for their son as for one who was dead.

But the prince was not dead. As the horse flew up, the prince continued to press his sides harder and harder, lest he should fall, and as the prince pressed his sides the horse mounted higher and higher. But presently the prince became

fatigued, he ceased to press the horse's sides, and let his feet hang loose, and then the horse ceased to rise, and began to fly onwards through the air.

The horse flew and flew over the mountains and over the plains, and all the while the prince was begging and coaxing it to stop. The prince stroked the horse's neck, and patted its head and said, "Good horse! kind horse! do stop, and take me back to the earth, or I shall fall ere long and be dashed to pieces."

And so it happened, that as the prince patted the horse's head, by chance his hand touched a silver stud that was between its ears. No sooner had the prince's hand touched the stud, than the horse ceased to fly forwards, and began to descend gently. It descended lower and lower, till at length, as the night came on, it lighted down in the midst of a garden.

The prince was hungry, but he feared to move in the darkness, lest he should fall into some pit or well. So he took the horse to pieces, and tied the pieces in a bundle, that it might not fly away; then he laid his head on the bundle, drew his shawl around him, and presently fell asleep.

Now the garden in which the prince had alighted was near to the city where the king of the country resided. The king had an only child, a daughter, and lest she should fall in love against his wish, the king kept her secluded in a palace, and every morning the widow of the king's chief gardener weighed the princess against a garland of flowers, and if the princess had not seen the face of a man within the palace, by virtue of the flowers, the garland weighed her down.

In the morning the widow went out as usual to gather her flowers; she gathered from one

garden, and she gathered from another garden ; at length she came to the garden where the prince was sleeping. To her surprise she beheld a young man lying on the pathway ; a shawl was drawn around him, his head was resting on a bundle. As the widow looked, the prince awoke.

The widow inquired of the prince who he was, and from whence he had come. The prince replied, that he was a traveller and had lost his way in the dark. And then he begged the widow to show him where he could procure food and a lodging. When the widow saw that the prince was young and handsome, her heart went out towards him, for she was childless. She conducted him to her own house, set food before him, and gave him a chamber to dwell in. Then she wove her flowers in a garland and went away to the palace.

After some days had passed, the prince became curious about the garlands: he wondered why the widow wove them, and where she took them. At length he made bold and asked her. He said: "My mother! why do you trouble to gather flowers every morning, and to make them into garlands, and to whom do you give the garlands?"

The widow only laughed, and made excuses. But as, day by day, the prince pressed her, at length she became weary of refusing, and, under promise of secrecy, she confided to him the princess's story.

When the prince had heard the story he was filled with a longing to see this princess who could be weighed against the flowers. "She must be a Sylf," he thought, "or a fairy, to be lighter than a garland." He pondered and re-

flected, how he might contrive to enter the palace and behold her. At length he resolved to make use of the magic horse.

So one night, when the widow had gone to rest, the prince took the bundle and ascended to the house-top; there he put the horse together, the bit in its mouth, and the saddle on its back. Then he mounted the horse, stroked its neck and pressed its sides, and bade it carry him away to the princess. As the prince spoke and pressed its sides, the horse began to rise: the horse rose and rose, and flew and flew, over the walls and over the towers, till it lighted down on the terrace before the princess's chamber.

As the horse descended the guards and the sentries, the princess and her maidens, in short, all the inmates of the palace, fell into a deep slumber. The prince crossed the terrace, and

entered the princess's chamber. The princess was lying sleeping on her couch, a veil was over her face, her maidens were slumbering on the floor around her. The prince approached and raised the princess's veil. When he saw her face, he was enchanted with its beauty. He knelt and remained gazing, half entranced, till the dawn was near arriving.

Before he left, the prince desired to express his love, so he took the princess's handkerchief that lay on her pillow, he pricked his arm with his dagger, and he wrote with his blood on the handkerchief, "O lady, I love you! I love you!" Then he softly left the chamber, mounted the horse, and returned to his lodging in the widow's house.

In the morning, when the princess woke and saw the writing on the handkerchief, she

wondered who could have done it. She resolved, that night, to keep awake and watch. But try as she would, when the second watch arrived, she fell into a slumber, and again, in the morning, were the same words on her handkerchief—"O lady, I love you! I love you!" and this went on for seven days. Each night at the second watch the princess fell asleep, each morning she found the same writing on her handkerchief.

On the eighth day the princess determined that she would remain awake. So she took a needle and scratched her finger, and rubbed salt into the wound, and the smart kept her from sleeping. The princess lay still and listened; as the gong struck the second watch, she heard a footfall on the terrace. Presently the curtain of the door was raised, and a young man, richly attired, entered the chamber; he advanced to the

couch and raised her veil. Then the princess started up and laughed, and demanded of the prince who he was, and why and how he had entered her chamber?

The prince in reply told her, how he was the son of a king, and how he had mounted the horse and been carried through the air, and had alighted in the garden; in short, he related to the princess all his adventures. Then he declared his love, and besought the princess to betroth herself to him.

In this manner the prince and princess sat conversing till the dawn was near to breaking; then they embraced and bade farewell, and the prince mounted the horse, and flew back to the widow's house. But in the morning, when the widow arrived with her flowers the princess weighed the garland down.

When the gardener's widow found that the princess could not be weighed against the flowers, she returned home anxious and perplexed. She thought, however, that the fault might be in the flowers, and so the next morning she was very careful in selecting them. Still they did not weigh the princess, nor did they the following day nor the day after.





PART THE SECOND.

WHEN the gardener's widow found that the princess could not be weighed against the flowers, she returned home anxious and perplexed. She thought, however, that the fault might be in the flowers, and so the next morning she was very careful in selecting them. Still they did not weigh the princess, nor did they the following day nor the day after. Then the widow was afraid to keep silence any longer, and she told the queen. The queen told the king, and the king sent for his ministers.

The ministers consulted and made up their minds that the princess must have a lover, but they advised the king not to say so. They recommended that it should be given out that the princess had lost a jewel, and that her apartments should be searched to discover the thief. The king approved, and the palace was searched from top to bottom and from end to end. But no lover was found, nor any way or passage discovered by which a man could have entered. The king had the guards doubled, and put spies among the princess's attendants. But all in vain! each morning the princess still weighed down the flowers.

The king was perplexed, and sent again for his ministers. Now it happened that the period of a great festival was approaching, and one of the amusements of the festival was, that the

common people flung coloured powder over each other. The ministers recommended that the king should have a coloured powder prepared the like of which no one else could procure, and that he should send it to the princess, and give her permission to keep the festival with her maidens. "For," they said, "if the princess has a lover, she will be sure to cast some of the powder over him, and then, by the stains on his dress he will be discovered."

So the king gave orders, and had a powder prepared of saffron and dust of gold, and sent it to the princess on the day of the festival, and gave her permission to amuse herself, like the common people, with her maidens.

The princess was delighted; she and all her maidens romped and played, and threw the powder over each other till they were tired, and

their dresses and the walls and floors were all stained yellow. But some of the powder the princess kept by her to cast on the prince, when in the night he should visit her.

The day wore away, the night arrived; as the watchman sounded the second watch, the prince, as usual, mounted the magic horse, and flew away to the palace. At the approach of the horse, the guards and all the inmates fell asleep, all but the princess, and she remained awake, and hid beside the doorway. Both her hands were filled with the powder; as the prince stepped in, she flung the powder over him, and his clothes and his face and his turban were all stained yellow!

When the prince learnt that the king had provided the powder, and had given the princess permission to use it, he became uneasy, for he

feared some treachery. He resolved, so soon as he could, to get his clothes washed privately. So the next morning he tied them in a bundle, disguised himself as a servant, and went down to the river.

The washermen were standing on the bank washing clothes, they dipped the clothes in the water and beat them on their washing boards, and each time the clothes struck the boards there came the sound of "thud, thud." The prince sat down and looked on.

But, one by one, the washermen departed, for the sports were still going on in the city. Before noon, only one washerman remained. The prince went up to him, and gave him the bundle, and asked that the clothes inside might be washed speedily. "For" he said, "they are my master's, and he is a merchant, and at evening he must continue his journey."

The washerman hesitated, for he desired to join his brethren in the sports. But when the prince showed him a piece of gold he consented, and promised that the clothes should be ready by the end of the third watch. So the prince gave him the piece of gold, and went and sat in a grove, and the washerman undid the bundle. When the washerman saw the clothes, and how fine they were, he thought it would be fun to parade in them once through the market-place. He said to himself, "I shall have time enough to wash them afterwards." So he slipped on the prince's clothes, mounted his donkey, and rode off to the city.

Now the chief minister had given orders to the police, that if they saw any man whose clothes were stained with saffron and gold dust, they should arrest him. "For," said he, "it

will be he that has stolen the princess's jewel;" and the minister promised a reward to whoever should discover the man. In hope of the reward, the police were wandering through the streets and lanes, and noticing the dresses of the revellers and passers-by.

And so it fell out, that as two of the police were loitering in the market-place, they heard a shouting. They looked, and beheld a man wearing a rich dress, mounted on a donkey, and a crowd of boys following and laughing and jeering.

The policemen drew near and perceived that in places the man's dress was stained yellow, and that as the sun shone on them the stains sparkled, as if powdered with dust of gold. On this the police seized the man, and bore him away to the chief minister. When the washer-

man found himself before the chief minister and heard that he was accused of having stolen the princess's jewel, he became half dead with fright. He threw himself on the ground, protested his innocence, and related his whole story.

He told how he had been given the dress to wash, how he had put it on for a frolic, and how he was to return it to the merchant's servant at the end of the third watch. In proof of his story he displayed the piece of gold he had received in advance for his labour.

The chief minister perceived that the washerman was speaking the truth. Also, he made no doubt that the young man who had given the dress to wash was the princess's lover. "Merchant's servants," he said to himself, "do not bestow gold pieces so lavishly."

The minister desired the washerman to return

and continue his washing. The minister sent a guard with him, and directed that they should conceal themselves till the servant appeared, and then come out and arrest him.

The washerman went back and stood on the bank, and washed his clothes as before, and the guards hid themselves in some bushes. At the end of the third watch the prince appeared, the washerman made a signal, the guard rushed forth, and the prince was seized and bound, and carried before the chief minister. The chief minister took him before the king, and the king ordered him off for execution.

At first the prince thought of declaring who he was, and how he loved the princess and desired to marry her. But then he reflected, that if he told his story the king might not believe him, and he could bring forward no proof—for his own

country was far away. Also he feared that it might disgrace the princess if he said that he had entered her palace and seen her. So he resolved to keep silence and trust for escape to his good fortune.

Now it was the custom of that country, that when a man was condemned to die, he was seated on an ass, and conducted round the outside of the city, and then he was led away to the place of execution. The prince had not gone half round the city, when he lifted his eyes, and saw above him the house of the gardener's widow. He called to the captain of the guard, and begged that he might have permission to enter, "for," he said, "it is the house of my mother, and I desire to bid her farewell."

The captain of the guard was compassionate, he took pity on the prince, and allowed him to

enter. But first he took a promise from the prince that he would not attempt to escape. Also, as a precaution, the captain surrounded the house with soldiers. The prince went in, and called to the widow. When she came, he embraced her, and bade her farewell, in a loud voice, that the guard might hear; but he whispered to her to run quickly to his chamber, and bring him down his bundle, and a bag of silver, and another of gold.

The widow brought down the bundle and the bags, the prince took them and came out of the house, the guard mounted him again on the ass, and when the circuit of the city had been completed, they led him away to the place of execution.

Now it happened that as the prince was thus being led away to execution, that the princess

was seated in her bower, and the window of the bower overlooked the plain. Presently, there appeared in view a party of soldiers, and in the midst of them some one seated on an ass. The princess inquired who it was that was seated on the ass? and where the soldiers were taking him?

One of the maidens answered, that it was the young man who had entered the palace and stolen the jewel, and then she related the whole story, how the young man had been discovered by the stains of gold dust on his dress, how he had been taken before the king, and how the king had ordered him to be put to death.

As the princess listened her heart died within her; she made some excuse to her maidens, and left her bower, and ascended a tower that adjoined it. There she sat and gazed over the plain, and

wept for her lover. But still she hoped that at the last the king might pardon him. So she waited till the soldiers should return. "If they bring him back," she thought, "somehow we will meet, and fly together." If the soldiers should return alone, she would know that her lover was dead, and then she resolved to leap from the tower and perish with him.

Now the place of execution was three leagues distant from the city, and the way lay across the plain, and the plain was bare and hot. When the soldiers had gone two leagues, they came to a great tree and a well. So they halted under the tree to rest and drink water. Then the prince asked the captain that he would permit him to climb the tree, and sit alone and meditate among the branches. The captain thought to himself, "There is no fear of his escaping: he cannot fly

away, and he cannot come down without our seeing him." So the captain gave the prince permission to ascend the tree, and the prince took his bundle and the two bags, and climbed up the tree and sat among the branches.

Presently, the prince undid the bag of silver, and began to drop the pieces, and as he dropped them, he called to the soldiers that whosoever found them might have them. "For," he said, "the money is of no use to me, as I am about to die."

The soldiers were lying resting below the tree. When they heard the prince call, and saw the silver falling, they rose in a hurry, and began to pick up the coins, and to run here and there in search of those that had rolled away; next they began to wrangle and quarrel. Then the prince undid the other bag, and let fall the gold. At the

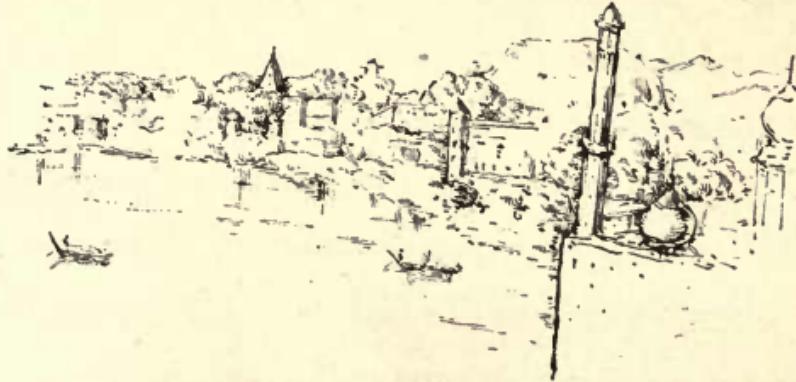
sight of the gold the soldiers became more excited than ever—soon they drew their swords, and it was as much as the captain could do to prevent their fighting. In their eagerness after the gold they presently lost all thought of their prisoner.

Meanwhile, the prince had climbed higher up the branches, till he was quite concealed by the foliage. Then he undid his bundle and put together the magic horse, and mounted it and stroked its neck, and pressed its sides, and bade the horse carry him away to the princess's palace. The princess was still sitting on the tower waiting till the soldiers should return, when far away in the distance she noticed as it were a speck moving towards her through the air. As she looked, the speck became a ball, then it assumed the appearance of a flying horse, and in another instant the prince her lover alighted beside her.

The prince lifted the princess in his arms, and placed her behind him on the saddle, and told her to clasp his waist, then he stroked the horse's neck again and pressed his sides, and bade the horse carry him back to his own country. As the prince spoke, the horse began to rise. The horse rose and rose, higher and higher, above the clouds to the blue sky, and then it flew and flew, faster than the wind, faster than a rocket. As the sun arose, it lighted down in the courtyard of the palace of the king, the prince's father.

Who can describe the joy of the king and of the queen at the prince's return! They embraced the prince, and they embraced the princess, they ordered the palace and the city to be illuminated, and they distributed alms to all the poor and indigent.

So soon as the preparations could be completed,



"The horse rose and rose, higher and higher."—*Page 142.*

the marriage of the prince and princess was solemnised with great magnificence. Then the king sent for the goldsmith and for the carpenter and bestowed on each of them handsome presents, but to the carpenter the king adjudged the superiority in skill, and in this judgment the goldsmith acquiesced, and the two ceased to dispute.

The horse and the silver fish were deposited in the royal treasury, but lest any mishap should again occur, the stud was removed from the horse's head, and with the stud the horse's magic virtue departed.

The princess sent an embassy to announce her marriage to her father and mother; the horse had flown the distance in a single night, but the embassy was a whole year in performing the journey.



THE BETROTHED PRINCESS.

ONCE upon a time long ago, it happened that one of the kings of the West was making a progress through his dominions. The king marched to the South, and he marched to the East; at length he arrived at a great plain, where a herd of antelope were feeding, and among them the king perceived that there was a single milk-white doe. The king forbade any of his attendants to shoot, for he said that he would take the doe alive, and send it as a present to the queen.

So the hounds were let slip, and the doe was separated from the herd, and the chase began. The doe bounded in front, and the king and his attendants galloped after, but as the hunt continued, one by one the horses became exhausted and stopped, till at length the king was left riding alone, and all unknowingly he passed beyond the limits of his dominions. Soon after he came in sight of a round green hill.

The doe cantered up the hill, the king followed, but when the king reached the summit he looked, and the doe had vanished, and below him there lay a great city. The king thought within himself that he would go on to the city, rest and refresh, and then return and seek his attendants. So thinking, the king descended the hill, and presently arrived at the gates of the city.

The gates of the city were standing wide open,

but there were neither guards nor gate-keepers, nor were any persons passing in or out. The king was surprised, nevertheless he went on and entered the city. He rode through one street and another, and squares and market-places. The shops were all open and their wares displayed, but there were no shopkeepers, nor could the king anywhere perceive signs of any inhabitants.

The king continued to ride on, till at length he came to a garden, and at the gate of the garden a man was standing. As the king approached, the man came forward, and saluted the king, and invited him to enter. The king entered the garden and dismounted, and sat down beneath the shade of a tree. The man tethered the king's horse, and gave him corn and water; then he went out, and returned with a basket; he took from the

basket a white cloth and spread it before the king, and on the cloth he laid provisions, wine, roast meat, and cakes of bread, and requested of the king that he would partake of them.

The king was hungry, but before he partook of the food he desired to know the secret of the city: How it was that the shops were open, and the wares spread, and yet there were no inhabitants?

The man replied, that the people of the city had fled away on account of a tiger, and were in the forest, asleep under enchantment, and the enchantment would continue till a woman should arrive and kill the tiger, for by the hand of a man it could not be slain.

The king inquired when the woman would arrive? The man did not answer. The king looked, and he had vanished, and from without

the garden came the sounds of a horseman approaching.

Now it happened that another king, one of the kings of the East, was also at this time travelling through his dominions, and in the course of his journeyings, he too had arrived at a great plain, and had chased a white doe and outstripped his attendants, and had lost the doe at a green hill, and had come on alone to the city, and just now he entered the garden.

The two kings saluted; then they sat down together beneath the tree and partook of the refreshments the man had spread. When they had eaten and drank, they began to converse: they told their adventures, and described their kingdoms and families. And so it was, that each king discovered that the other had an only child, the king

of the West a son, and the king of the East a daughter.

When the two kings ascertained this, they resolved, that then and there they would betroth their children to each other, so that when they grew up they should marry, and the two kingdoms become united. In token of the betrothal, the king of the West gave to the king of the East his ring and his bracelet, and the king of the East presented to the king of the West his belt and his dagger. Then the two kings embraced and bade farewell, and each mounted his horse and returned to his own dominions.

When the king of the East had finished his progress, and arrived again at his capital, he summoned his nobles and ministers. He informed them how that he had betrothed the princess, his daughter, to the son of the king of the West,

and he had the tokens of betrothal, the ring and the bracelet, deposited in the royal treasury. In due time, the king of the West also completed his progress, and returned to his capital. When he had entered his palace, he sent for his treasurer, and delivered to him the belt and dagger. But he did not inform the nobles or ministers of the betrothal, nor did he tell the queen. He said to himself, “The story is long ; some other day I will hold an audience, and declare it.” And so from day to day he delayed ; and while he thus delayed, it happened that he fell sick and died, and the queen took charge of the kingdom, till such time as the prince her son should become of age.

When some years had passed and the prince had arrived at manhood, the queen desired that he should marry, and she proposed that he should

take to wife the daughter of one of the kings of the region. But in the night time, when the prince slept, the spirit of the king his father appeared to him, and told him the story of his betrothal, and entreated him that he should marry only the princess of the East. "For," he said, "till my promise is fulfilled my spirit can find no peace."

The next day the prince related the vision he had seen to the queen his mother, and asked permission that he might set out with an army, and horses and elephants, and fetch home his betrothed from the East. But the queen only laughed; she said, "If the king your father had really betrothed you, would he not have informed me and the nobles?"

The prince was perplexed, but in the night the spirit of his father again appeared to him,

and told him of the belt and the dagger that he had received in token of the betrothal. In the morning the prince rose early, and went to the treasury, and there he found the belt and the dagger as the spirit had described them. But the queen only said: "Scores of kings and princes made gifts to your father. Who can say from which of them came this belt and dagger?"

Again the prince was perplexed, but in the night time when he slept, for the third time he beheld the spirit of his father. And his father wept, and entreated him, and said, "O my son! delay not, but go quickly, and bring home your betrothed, that my spirit may find rest." Still the queen would not give her consent. She said, "Who knows! the princess may be dead or be married to another, and you, my son, will only return disgraced and ashamed."

The prince prayed and entreated, but when he found that he could not prevail, then he determined to set out secretly, and alone. So he put on a cap of steel and a suit of chain armour, and took jewels and gold, and at night time he left the palace, and mounted his horse, and rode away to claim his bride in the East.

Now while the prince had been growing up to manhood here in the West, in the East the king's daughter from a child had become a woman. When she came to be fifteen years old, the king her father began to expect that each day the prince, her betrothed husband, would arrive to marry her, and take her back to his own country. But one year passed, and another year passed, and the prince did not arrive, nor any letter or embassy.

When two years had gone by, then the king

said: "Either the prince is dead, or else the king his father has broken his troth." And so the king sent an ambassador, and arranged a marriage for his daughter with the son of one of the monarchs of the region. And the day for the wedding had been fixed, and the bridegroom was approaching the city. But the princess grieved, for by thinking and thinking she had fallen in love with the prince her betrothed, and longed and hoped that he might still arrive and claim her.

So here is the princess mourning in her bower, and the bridegroom coming on with an army and horses and elephants, and the prince her betrothed riding all alone and unattended through the wastes and the forests.

The bridegroom marched and marched, one day three leagues, one day four leagues, and so,

marching and marching, he had at length arrived within sight of the city: there he had pitched his camp. On the morrow he was to make his entry, and on the day following the marriage was to be solemnised. All through the palace and city there were preparations and rejoicings.

But the princess only did not rejoice; she sat dejected in her bower, looking sadly over the plain, and as she looked, she sighed, and longed, that even now her betrothed might arrive and claim her. "But he comes not," she said, "and the hours pass, and soon it will be too late." And so it happened that as the princess thus looked and sighed, far away to the West she saw a horseman approaching. She called to her nurse and said, "Nurse! Nurse! come quickly and look, for a horseman is coming on

from the West, and may be it is the prince my betrothed."

The nurse came to the window and looked, but she only replied, "It is not a prince that approaches, my lady! it is but a mounted messenger."

The horseman came nearer, and presently the princess called again, "Nurse! Nurse! he is no messenger, for see, he wears chain armour and a cap of steel, and his horse is a horse of Arabia."

But the nurse only replied, "My lady, he is some noble on his way to the bridegroom's camp."

The horseman came still nearer, he reached the city walls, he passed below the princess's bower, and rode away round the eastern tower. Then the princess called again to her nurse, and bade

her go and discover if the horseman had entered the city or gone on to the bridegroom's camp. "For," she said, "if he has entered the city, I shall know that he is indeed my betrothed."

The nurse disguised herself: she put on a tattered dress, and threw over her head a ragged shawl, and went down to the gateway. But at the gateway crowds were coming in and out, and none could inform her if the horseman had entered or gone on. The nurse said to herself, "If he has entered the city, he will be in the caravanserai." So she went on to the caravanserai, and there she saw a young man seated beneath a tree; he had on a coat of mail, and on his head a steel cap inlaid with gold, and an Arab horse was tethered beside him.

The nurse went near, and asked for alms; the young man threw her a piece of silver, and then

he began to converse; he asked why the city was so full of crowds and strangers, and what meant all these preparations for rejoicing?

In reply, the nurse informed him, how the king's daughter had been betrothed to a prince in the West, and how the king had waited, but the prince had not appeared, and how she was now to be married to a prince of the region, and how the bridegroom had arrived, and on the morrow would enter the city, and how the wedding would take place the day after.

When the nurse had finished speaking, the young man gave a deep sigh, and exclaimed, "Alas! alas! it has come true, as my mother warned me; I left in hope and joyful, I shall return ashamed and in sorrow!"

Then he called to the woman of the caravan-serai and bade her haste and bring him food, for

when he had eaten, and his horse was rested, he would depart.

The nurse returned and told all to the princess. When the princess had heard the nurse's story, she sent the nurse to the guard-room, and desired her to bring a sword and shield, a dagger, and a bow and arrows. The princess clothed herself in male attire, she girded on the sword and put the dagger in her girdle, the shield she slung on her back. She hid gold and jewels about her person, then she took the bow and arrows, and descended to the stables. There she mounted a fleet horse, passed through the postern gate, and rode away to the West, and as the sun began to sink she came up to the prince.

The prince was riding slowly, with bent head sadly reflecting, when he heard behind him the tramp of a horse. The prince turned his head,

and beheld a young lad cantering towards him. The lad was mounted on a fleet steed, he was armed with sword and dagger, a shield hung at his back, and he carried a bow and a quiver full of arrows.

The prince inquired who he was, and what he desired? The lad replied, that he was the son of a chief, and was going to seek service in the West, and he desired the prince's permission, that he might journey beside him. The prince assented, and they rode on together. They rode on and on, through the wastes and through the forests, till at length they came to a great plain, and so it fell out, that one day as they were riding over the plain and conversing, they wandered from the right road, and took by mischance the road that led to the green hill and the enchanted city.

They passed through the gates, and went along the streets and the markets; the shops were all open as before and the wares spread, but there were no people coming or going, nor in the houses were there any signs of inhabitants. They rode on wondering greatly; at length they came to a garden, and there a man was standing.

The man came forward, and invited them to enter, and tethered their horses, and gave them corn and water. Then he went out and returned with a basket; he took from the basket a white cloth, and spread it before the prince and his companion, and on the cloth he placed a repast of roast meat and wine, and cakes of bread. But when the prince desired to question him he had disappeared.

The prince and his companion ate and drank,

then when the sun had set they spread their carpets, placed their saddles for pillows, and lay down to rest. The prince slept, but the princess, his companion, remained awake, and watched. Presently, as the night advanced, the horses began to tremble and shake. The princess aroused the prince and said, "My lord! the horses are trembling—I mistrust that some danger approaches." The prince sat up and listened; then he said, "It is nothing; the horses have rolled in the dust and are shaking themselves;" and he lay down and slept again.

But the horses continued to tremble, and the princess heard sounds from without. She awoke the prince again, and bade him listen. The prince listened; then he said, "It is nothing, only that the wild beasts are roaming and call-



"The Princess let fly the arrow."—*Page 167.*

ing to each other in the forest;" and he lay down and slept again.

But the princess mistrusted; she rose and took her bow and arrows and hid behind a tree, and watched. At midnight the horses trembled so that the very earth shook with their trembling, and the princess saw the form of a wild beast enter the garden and creep towards the prince. The princess put an arrow in her bow, and drew the bow with all her strength, and let fly the arrow, and the beast fell and died.

When the beast fell the horses ceased trembling, but the princess kept watch till the morning. In the morning, when the prince awoke, at his feet lay the form of a tiger: it did not move, and the prince saw that it was dead, and in its heart was an arrow; and presently there came from the city the murmur as of a

great multitude, for when the tiger fell dead the enchantment was removed, and the inhabitants woke up, and returned from the forest. The gatekeepers went to the gates, and the guards to their stations, the shopkeepers repaired to their shops and their stalls, and the rich people and the nobles to their houses and palaces.

When the inhabitants had all returned, the chiefs and the nobles assembled together, and determined to find the woman who had slain the tiger, and freed the city from the enchantment, and to make her their queen. They searched here, and they searched there, till at length they came to the garden, and there they found the tiger lying dead, and the prince and his companion seated near it.

The chiefs and the nobles inquired of the prince where the woman was who had slain the

tiger? The prince replied, that it was no woman, but the lad his companion. To make a long story short, the prince insisted that his companion had killed the tiger, and the chiefs and nobles maintained that it could have fallen only by the hand of a woman.

In the end, when the princess perceived that her secret would at length be discovered, she threw a shawl over her head, and called the prince aside and told him her story, and confessed that in truth she was a woman, the king's daughter, his betrothed. The prince was overjoyed, and embraced her, and then he presented her to the chiefs of the city, who proclaimed her their queen.

The chiefs then sent for a golden litter, and conducted the princess to the royal palace, and as soon as the preparations could be completed the

prince and princess were married, with all state and magnificence, and for the space of seven days there was feasting and rejoicing throughout the whole city and kingdom.

When the rejoicings were concluded, the prince sent an embassy to the queen his mother, and informed her of his marriage, and also of all else that had befallen him. The princess in like manner despatched nobles with letters and presents to the king her father. When he had read the letters, the king rejoiced greatly, and presently he set out with an army, and came and visited his daughter. The prince's mother also arrived with a great retinue, to behold and embrace her son. She made over to him his kingdom, and retired to her own palace and passed her time in devotion.

The king also, as he was now old, resolved to

abandon the world; he placed the prince on the throne, and retired himself to a hermitage. And thus the prince became the ruler of three kingdoms. In process of time, three sons were born to him, and each he made heir to one of his dominions.





THE GRASSCUTTER'S SON.

GN a certain city, long ago, there resided a man who made his living by cutting grass. Each morning he repaired to the jungle, in the evening he returned and sold in the market the grass he had collected. In this manner he maintained himself and his wife and their one child, a son, whose name was Gheesa.

But after a time it happened that there came a drought in that land, and the grass around the city dried up, and the grasscutters had each

day to go further and further to obtain a supply, and so it fell out that one day, as the man went with his companions, the sun struck him, and he died.

His companions brought home the corpse, and the relations assembled, and performed the funeral rites. When the funeral rites were completed, the widow took her husband's knife, and the rope wherewith he was accustomed to bind his grass, and hid them away in the thatch of the cottage, and then she set about to obtain a living for herself and her son. She laboured in the fields, and she ground corn for her neighbours, and so, by the blessing of Providence, she managed to provide food and raiment for them both.

When the lad had come to be fifteen years of age, the widow took down from the thatch

her husband's knife and his rope, and gave them to her son, and said, "My son! It is time now that you should help to maintain yourself; go and cut grass as did your father."

Gheesa took the rope in his hand, and stuck the knife in his girdle, and went away to the jungle. All day he cut grass, in the evening he sold it and brought the price to his mother.

Now it happened after some months that one day, as Gheesa was cutting grass near the river, there came a man, and cast a line into the water, and presently he drew to land a fine fish. When Gheesa returned in the evening, he related to his mother what he had seen, and said, "Mother! if I had a hook and a line, I too, might catch fish and bring them home for our supper.

The widow went out, and bought a line and two hooks, and gave them to Gheesa, and next

day he took them with him to the jungle. He baited the hook, and tied the line to a post, and went and cut grass. When he had made up his bundle of grass, he returned, and drew in the line, and lo ! on the hook was a fine fish. Gheesa placed the fish on his bundle of grass, and lifted the bundle on his head, and set off for the city. He had not gone far when he met a traveller.

The traveller stopped him and said, " My lad ! that is a fine fish, will you sell it ? " and he offered Gheesa some pennies. Gheesa refused them ; he said, " I am taking the fish home to my mother for her supper." Then the traveller offered him a piece of silver. At the sight of the silver, Gheesa hesitated ; he thought, " Perhaps my mother will prefer the piece of silver to the fish." In the end Gheesa sold the traveller the fish, and

placed the piece of silver in his girdle, and continued his way to the city.

Presently he heard a voice crying, "For the love of God bestow charity on me, for I am hungry and destitute." Gheesa looked, and saw that a blind beggar was seated by the roadside asking alms. Gheesa thought to himself, "It will be better to bestow the price of the fish on this blind man than to take it home to my mother." And so thinking, he took the piece of silver from his girdle, and gave it to the beggar. Then he went on to the city, and sold his grass in the market, and returned home, and related to his mother all that had happened.

When his mother heard that he had given the piece of silver to the beggar she approved. She said, "My son, doubtless from this act of charity some good fortune will result."

The next day, Gheesa took his hook and line again to the river; he baited the hook, cast it into the water, and tied the line to the post, and went and cut grass as before. When he returned in the evening he found that he had caught another fish. He drew the fish to land, and laid it on the grass in his bundle, and then he lifted the bundle to place it on his head, but try as he might, he could not raise the bundle above his shoulder.

Gheesa looked to see if there was any one by that could aid him. He beheld an old man, a Fukkeer, approaching. Gheesa called to him. "Holy father!" he said, "I pray you, assist me to raise this my bundle." The Fukkeer came near, and answered, "My son, I will help you, but first close your eyes." Gheesa said to himself, "Why does he want me to close my eyes?

Is it that he may steal my fish while I shut them?" But then he reflected that there was no fear of that, as he was the strongest; so he closed his eyes.

When Gheesa had closed his eyes, the Fukkeer placed one hand before them, with the other hand he lifted the bundle and set it on Gheesa's head; then the Fukkeer withdrew his hand, and Gheesa opened his eyes, and lo! there was neither river, nor jungle, nor fish, nor bundle, but he was in the midst of a great desert, and the Fukkeer was standing beside him.

At first Gheesa was bewildered; then as he beheld the desert around him, he was filled with terror and despair: he cast himself on the ground, and commenced to weep and lament. But the Fukkeer bade him cease; he said, "Boy! rise up and follow me." Gheesa was frightened, and

obeyed. The Fukkeer walked in front, Gheesa came after, and so they went on and on, till at length they arrived at a great city. They entered the city, and put up in the caravanserai.

When they had been some days in the caravanserai, the Fukkeer said, "Boy, I hear the sound of music: go and see what is happening." Gheesa went out into the street, and saw a procession passing by. In the midst was a lady on horseback; she held a bow and arrows in her hand, on her back was slung a shield.

Gheesa inquired who the lady was, and they told him she was the king's daughter. Gheesa returned, and informed the Fukkeer. He said, "Master! the king's daughter was going by, and she is very beautiful."

The Fukkeer answered, "Ah! she is beautiful: that is well."

When more days had passed, the Fukkeer said again to Gheesa, "Boy! I hear a sound of talking: go out, and learn what the people are saying." Gheesa went out into the street and listened. He came back and reported, "Master, the people are saying that the prince from beyond the mountains is coming to marry the king's daughter."

When the Fukkeer heard this, he flew in a passion, and exclaimed, "Ah! will he dare to come without my leave? Then he shall go back ashamed!"

The next morning the Fukkeer went out, and returned with a yellow dress like his own. He gave it to Gheesa, and said, "Boy! go, put on this dress, and return."

Gheesa retired, and put on the dress, and returned. His own clothes he left in his cell.

Then the Fukkeer said, “Boy! go to the palace, and desire the king that he give you his daughter in marriage.”

Gheesa answered, “But if the guards stop me, how shall I enter?”

The Fukkeer raised his staff, and touched Gheesa with it on the shoulder, and said, “Go, boy! go! now none will hinder you.”

Gheesa went away to the palace. He entered the gates, and passed the guards and stood before the king. The king was seated on his throne holding audience, the golden canopy was above his head — around were the nobles and ministers.

The king lifted up his eyes, and lo! before him was standing a lad in the dress of a Fukkeer. The king bade the chief minister inquire whence the lad came, and what he desired.

Gheesa replied as his master had instructed him. "I come," he said, "from beyond the desert, and I desire that the king bestow on me the princess, his daughter, for my bride."

When the king understood this answer, he was filled with fury. He summoned the chief executioner, and gave orders that Gheesa should be conducted beyond the city, and beheaded. But the nobles and ministers stood up and made intercession. "It is not well," they said, "to shed the blood of a holy lad, lest some misfortune befall the kingdom. Rather, let him be beaten and turned out of the palace." The king consented, and the guards seized Gheesa and beat him till he was senseless, and then they dragg'd him without the gates and cast him on a heap of rubbish.

Gheesa lay all day on the heap of rubbish;

at sunset, he came to himself, and crawled back to the caravanserai. There he threw himself at the Fukkeer's feet, and displayed his wounds and bruises, and said, "Master! you sent me to demand the king's daughter, and see what I have received!"

The Fukkeer bade Gheesa rise. Then the Fukkeer took a pot of ointment from his girdle, and anointed Gheesa with the ointment, and immediately his pains ceased and his bruises vanished, and also he forgot all that had happened. He did not remember that he had gone to the palace, nor that he had been beaten, nor anything else that had befallen him.

The next morning, the Fukkeer sent Gheesa again to the palace. The king was seated on his throne holding audience; he lifted up his eyes, and lo! there was the same lad in the

Fukkeer's dress standing before him, and demanding the princess in marriage. The king again was transported with rage ; he gave the order, and Gheesa was seized and beaten, and thrown out on the heap of rubbish, as before. In the evening he returned to the caravanserai and was anointed, and forgot all that had happened.

When this had gone on for seven days, the king became alarmed, and consulted his ministers. "Surely," he said, "this lad is a magician, else how could he enter the palace every day, and no one see him, and be beaten senseless each noon, and yet be whole and well the next morning ?" Then the king continued : "Against magic who can contend ?—perhaps it is best that I let him marry the princess."

But the ministers made answer, "The king's daughter must not be so lightly bestowed," and

then they advised that the lad should be set four tasks, such as no man could perform, "If he accomplishes them," they said, "well and good; if not, let him be cast into a dungeon." The king approved of the advice of the ministers.

The next morning Gheesa presented himself as usual and demanded the princess. The king called him near and said: "First, the princess must have a necklace of pearls like that of the queen her mother."

The king sent for the necklace and showed it to Gheesa; each pearl was the size of a nut: there was no such other necklace on the face of the earth.

Gheesa returned home, and told his master. The Fukkeer smiled and said, "The king thinks to mock us, but we shall see! we shall see!"

When even had come, and they had eaten their supper, the Fukkeer said to Gheesa, "Boy! lie down and sleep, for you have far to go before the morning." Gheesa lay down and slept. When the second watch of the night had arrived, the Fukkeer awoke Gheesa and said, "Boy, go out into the street, and get me an iron nail and a potsherd."

Gheesa went out into the street, and presently came to a rubbish heap. On the heap were lying some broken pots and an old horse shoe. Gheesa drew a nail out of the horse shoe, and took a piece of one of the broken pots, and returned, and gave them to his master.

The Fukkeer held the potsherd in the palm of his left hand, and with his right hand he wrote on it with the iron nail. Then the Fukkeer returned the potsherd to Gheesa, and bade

him place it in his girdle, and gave him his staff, and directed him to go out, through the north gate of the city, and hold the staff before him and say, "Staff, staff! carry me to the mountain." Then the Fukkeer went on to tell Gheesa that when he reached the mountain he was to call, and to give the potsherds to whoever should appear.

When the Fukkeer had finished speaking, Gheesa took the staff, and left the caravanserai, and departed through the north gate of the city. Then he held the staff before him with both hands and said, "Staff! Staff! carry me to the mountain."

Immediately, the staff began to rise: it rose and rose above the city, above the clouds, till it reached the blue sky, and then it flew and flew, faster than the wind, faster than a rocket, till

it presently lighted down at the foot of the mountain.

Gheesa stood upright, and turned his face toward the mountain, and cried, "Whosoever's duty it is, let him appear, and receive my Master's orders."

As Gheesa spoke, the mountain opened, and a Jin appeared and stood before him. Gheesa drew the potsherd from his girdle, and gave it to the Jin. The Jin read the writing on the potsherd, then he shouted, and four other Jins came forth from the mountain. The Jin addressed them and said, "Go, bring me the necklace of pearls that my father obtained from the queen of the mermaids."

The four Jins went back into the mountain, and presently returned bearing a brazen casket. Then the Jin commanded and they raised Gheesa



"Gheesa . . . drew forth a necklace of pearls." —*Page 191.*

in their arms, and flew with him through the air, and before the morning dawned they had lighted down and set him in the court of the king's palace.

When the king came forth to hold audience, lo ! there was standing before him the lad in the dress of a Fukkeer, and in his hand was a brazen casket. Gheesa advanced toward the throne, and lifted the cover of the casket, and drew forth a necklace of pearls, and presented it to the king, and the king saw that every pearl was the size of a pigeon's egg.

Then Gheesa bowed himself before the king and said, "My Lord ! I have brought the necklace of pearls, now give permission that I marry the princess."

But the king answered, "The princess must first have a wedding dress of silver tissue, so fine

that it will pass through the ring of a finger, and woven without seam or join."

Gheesa returned to the caravanserai, and related to the Fukkeer all that had happened, and also what the king demanded. The Fukkeer smiled, and replied as before, "The king thinks to mock us, but we shall see! we shall see!"

When the second watch of the night had arrived, the Fukkeer awoke Gheesa, and bade him fetch again a piece of potsherd from the street. The Fukkeer wrote on the potsherd with the iron nail, and sent Gheesa with the potsherd to the mountain as before. When Gheesa reached the mountain he stood upright, and cried out, and the Jin appeared.

The Jin took the potsherd, and read the writing; then he shouted, and four Jins came forth

and stood before him. The Jin asked them, "Where is to be found a wedding dress of silver tissue woven without seam or join, and so fine that it will pass through the ring of a finger?"

One of the four Jins answered and said, "In the Isles of the West the son of a king is to be married, and the queen of the spiders has woven dresses for him and his bride, and they are of silver tissue, and have neither seam nor join."

Then the Jin commanded, and the four Jins raised Gheesa in their arms, and flew with him, over the lands and over the seas, till they came to the Isles of the West, and there they entered the prince's chamber, and took the wedding dresses that had been woven by the queen of the spiders. Before the morning dawned they had lighted down, and set Gheesa in the court of the king's palace.

When the king came forth to hold audience, lo! there again was the lad in the Fukkeer's dress, and in his hand were two wedding garments. The garments were of silver tissue, they had neither seam nor join, and they both passed together through the ring of the king's finger.

Then Gheesa advanced and bowed himself before the king, and said, "My Lord! I have brought the wedding dresses: now give permission that I marry the princess."

But the king answered, "First, the princess must have a palace of crystal, and the ceilings of silver and gold."

Gheesa returned to the caravanserai, and told his master all that had happened, and also what now the king demanded. The Fukkeer smiled, and replied as before, "The king thinks to mock us, but we shall see! we shall see!"

At the second watch of the night, the Fukkeer awoke Gheesa, and sent him out for the piece of potsherd. Gheesa went to the rubbish heap, and returned with a piece of the broken pot. The Fukkeer wrote on it with the iron nail, and gave Gheesa his staff, and bade him haste to the mountain, and deliver the piece of potsherd to the Jin.

When the Jin had read the writing on the potsherd, he shouted, and the four Jins appeared. The Jin inquired of them, “Where can be found a palace of crystal, with ceilings of silver and gold?”

One of the Jins answered, “The king of the South has married a bride, and the Fairies have built them a palace of crystal, and the ceilings are of silver and gold,—and as yet the king has not entered the palace.”

Then the Jin commanded, and the four Jins raised Gheesa, and placed him on their shoulders, and flew away to the land of the South, and lifted up the palace of crystal, and before the day dawned, they had set it down on the bank of the river, but Gheesa they left in the court before the king's throne.

In the morning when the king awoke, he heard the sound of shouting; he inquired the reason; the attendants answered and said, "Oh! your Majesty! in the night a wonderful thing has occurred, a palace of crystal has been built on the bank of the river, and the people are coming together to behold, and are shouting with wonder."

The king went to the window, and there indeed, opposite, was a palace of crystal, and as the sun shone the king had to shade his eyes from the glitter of the walls.

When the king came forth to hold audience, lo ! there was the lad in the Fukkeer's dress standing in front of the throne as before. As the king lifted his eyes, Gheesa advanced, and bowed himself and said, " My Lord, the palace of crystal is ready : give permission now that I marry the princess." But the king answered, " First, the princess must have a bridge of marble, that she may pass over the river, and enter her palace."

When the king had finished speaking, Gheesa bowed himself and departed, and returned to the caravanserai and told to his master all that had happened, and what the king demanded. The Fukkeer smiled, and said, " So again, the king desires to mock us, but we shall see ! we shall see ! "

At the second watch of the night the Fukkeer

aroused Gheesa, and bade him fetch a potsherd as before. Gheesa went out into the street, but the heap of rubbish had been removed, and look as he would, not a piece of broken pot could he find. Gheesa ran here, and ran there, he went up the street and down the street, and all the while the Fukkeer kept calling, "Haste! boy, haste! bring the potsherd quickly, or all will be lost."

Gheesa ran back in despair, but as he entered the gates he saw standing a new water-jar that the cook of the caravanserai had bought and placed before her door. Gheesa took a stone and broke the jar, and carried one of the pieces to his master.

The Fukkeer wrote on the potsherd with the iron nail, and gave Gheesa his staff, and desired him to haste away to the mountain. Gheesa

took the staff, and passed out through the north gate of the city, and held the staff before him with both hands, and the staff carried him through the air and blue sky, and set him down at the foot of the mountain. Then Gheesa cried, and the Jin appeared, and Gheesa delivered to him the piece of potsherd.

When the Jin had read the writing on the potsherd, he uttered such a shout that the earth shook, and the trees of the forest bowed themselves, and the wild beasts howled and trembled with fear. The four Jins came out of the mountain and stood before him with folded hands.

The Jin said, "See how this man seeks my destruction ! Who can build a bridge over a river, whose bed is a quicksand that would swallow up a mountain ?" But one of the four Jins answered, and said, "My Lord ! in the land of the East

there is a river that hath no bottom, but the king of the demons has made a bridge of marble, that floats on the water, so that the people of the city may pass to and fro."

The Jin commanded, and the four Jins raised Gheesa in their arms, and placed him on their shoulders, and flew away to the land of the East, to the river that had no bottom. They lifted up the floating bridge, and ere the morning dawned, they had set it down before the crystal palace.

When the king awoke, he heard again the sound of shouting, and his attendants said, "Oh ! your Majesty ! in the night time another marvel has occurred, and over the river, from this palace to that, there is a bridge of marble that floats upon the water ! "

When the king came forth to hold audience

Gheesa advanced to before the throne, and bowed himself, and said, "My Lord, all the things are procured that the king desired: now let the princess be given me for my bride!"

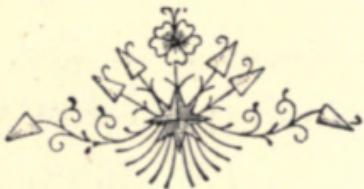
The king consulted his nobles and ministers. They said, "The lad has performed the tasks that were set him: it is best now that he be permitted to marry the princess."

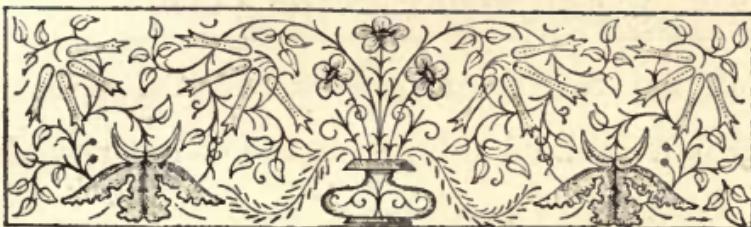
The king approved, and gave orders, and Gheesa was clothed in royal robes, and the title of prince was bestowed on him, and guards and attendants were provided for him, and he was conducted to a house in the city, there to dwell till such time as the Astrologers should have determined on a fortunate day for the wedding.

So here are the Astrologers making their calculations, and the bride sitting in her chamber, and

the bridegroom remaining in his house, and all through the city and the palace preparations are being made for the marriage.

And now, let us see what is going on in the caravanserai.





PART THE SECOND.

WHEN the cook rose up in the morning and found her water-jar in fragments, she began to weep and lament; next she flew in a passion, and accused the travellers near her of having destroyed it. One of them answered her: "Good woman! it was none of us that did the mischief, but that lad of the Fukkeer's, that goes every morning to the palace, and is beaten and turned out. I was awake in the night, and saw him break it with a stone."

The Fukkeer was sitting under a tree; the

cook ran to him, and demanded the price of her jar. The Fukkeer answered her roughly, the two began to wrangle, the other travellers joined in: soon the place was in an uproar.

When the dispute was at its height, it happened that the nurse of the princess passed by. She stopped to listen. When she heard about the lad that went to the palace each day and was beaten, she thought to herself, "Why! that must be the young man that the princess is about to marry! What can this Fukkeer have to do with him?"

She returned to the palace and told the queen. "Your Majesty!" she said, "there is a dangerous man in the caravanserai: it were well if he was sent for and examined." The queen spoke to the king; the king bade an officer go and bring the Fukkeer to the palace. But when

the officer reached the caravanserai, the Fukkeer was not there. The people reported that he had taken his staff and bundle and departed out of the city.

The king said, "It is well! he has left: it is enough." But the nurse mistrusted; she feared that he might return secretly among the crowds at the wedding, and do the prince some evil.

When the day arrived that had been fixed by the astrologers, Gheesa rose early, and arrayed himself in his dress of silver tissue. Then he was conducted to the palace, where his marriage with the princess was solemnised with great magnificence. After the ceremony there were shows and performances, and the people were admitted to behold them. The nurse said to herself, "That Fukkeer will enter among the crowds," and she sat at the gate and watched.

But the Fukkeer did not enter; then the nurse thought, "He may have changed his appearance and come in unobserved."

The nurse wandered among the people, and looked, if so be that she might discover him. Presently she noticed that a man in the guise of a chief was secretly making signs to the prince. Soon the prince approached him, and they withdrew to beneath a latticed window and began to converse. The nurse ran quickly and ascended a secret stair and crouched behind the lattice of the window and held her breath, and listened. She heard the man in the guise of a chief address the prince, and say, "Boy! remember, when to-night I give the signal, come out and meet me on the terrace," and the prince answered humbly, "Yes! Master, I will come."

The nurse marvelled. She thought to herself,

“Who is this man, that the prince should call him master? and what does he want with the prince to-night on the terrace?” Her heart misgave her. She hastened to the princess and fell at her feet, and besought her: “My life! my darling,” she said, “whether the bridegroom begs or whether he orders, do not let him go to-night on the terrace, for I have had a dream, that he fell, and was injured.”

The princess smiled, but when the nurse continued to supplicate, she promised, and said, “Whether he commands, or whether he entreats, to-night the prince shall not cross the threshold.”

The entertainments continued till the evening; then the princess bade farewell to her parents, and she and the bridegroom were conveyed over the marble bridge to the palace of crystal. At the gates of the palace the attendants received

them and conducted them to a hall that opened on the terrace, and spread a banquet before them on dishes of gold, and retired. Gheesa and the princess sat down to the banquet, but first the princess drew from her hand an emerald ring, and placed it on Gheesa's finger.

The princess and Gheesa had not sat long at the banquet, when from without there came a low sound, as of a tapping. Gheesa rose hastily and went towards the window. The princess called him back: she inquired, "Why, my love, do you rise thus hastily and go towards the window?"

Gheesa replied, "I go to see the moon shining in the garden." The princess laughed and said, "There is no moon to-night, my love, how then will you see it shining in the garden?" Gheesa was ashamed and sat down. But again he heard the

sound of tapping ; for the second time he rose and went toward the window. The princess called him back as before, and inquired why he went to the window. Gheesa replied, "I go to hear the nightingales: listen how sweetly they are singing."

The princess listened and laughed. "It is not nightingales singing," she said, "but the jackals that are howling." Gheesa was ashamed and sat down ; but presently, for the third time, came the sound of the tapping, and now it was louder. Gheesa was frightened, and rose hurriedly and went towards the window. But when the princess inquired why he went he had no excuse ready. For a minute he stood confused ; then he fell at the princess's feet and told her all his story.

He told her how he was no prince but only a grasscutter's son, how he had caught the fish and

been transported to the desert, how he had gone to the mountain and brought the pearls and the wedding dresses, and the bridge and the palace: in short, he related to the princess all his adventures, and then he entreated that she would permit him to meet his master on the terrace, "for," he said, "he is a magician, and if I anger him he may do me some evil."

As Gheesa continued to beg and entreat, the princess's resolution gave way, she forgot her promise to the nurse, and consented: "Only," she said, "all the while I must hold your hand, and you are not to go further than I can reach." Gheesa promised, and then he and the princess walked to the window. The princess remained within clasping Gheesa's hand in her own, and Gheesa stepped out on the terrace.

But the dew had begun to fall and the terrace

was slippery, and so, as Gheesa's foot touched the pavement it slid, and he stumbled, and as he stumbled his hand jerked from out of the hand of the princess.

Gheesa recovered himself and stood upright; but lo! there was neither palace, nor terrace, nor garden, nor was it night, but he was standing by the river, in the jungle, and the sun was shining, his bundle of grass was at his feet, and on the grass was the fish. The grass was still damp, and the fish was wet, as when he drew it from the water.

At first Gheesa thought that he had been dreaming and had awakened, but then he saw that his grasscutter's clothes were lying on the bank beside the bundle, and that he was wearing the wedding dress of silver tissue, and that on his finger was the emerald ring, which the

princess had given him. As he looked, he knew that he had not dreamed, but that what had befallen him was real. His eyes filled with tears, and he wept for his lost bride.

But ere long he reflected that tears were unavailing, and that it would be better to return home, and wait in patience till it should please fate to restore her. So reflecting, he slipped off the wedding dress and clothed himself in his own garments. The wedding dress he rolled up and hid in his breast. Then he lifted his bundle of grass, with the fish, and placed it on his head and set out for the city, and this time he raised the fish quite easily.

He sold his grass in the market, and then he proceeded on towards his mother's house. As he approached the house, he began to consider. "When my mother," he thought, "asks me

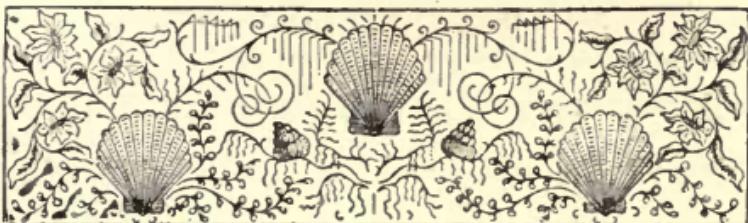
where I have been all this long while, what answer shall I give her? If I tell the truth she will never believe me." But when he entered the cottage, his mother said only, "My son! you are late this evening. I have been awaiting you this half hour!" Gheesa marvelled; he thought to himself, "I have been absent these seven months, and yet all my mother says is, 'I have been awaiting you this half hour.'"

Gheesa made over to his mother the fish and the money he had received for the grass. His mother put by the money, the fish she cooked for supper, and Gheesa ate of it heartily, for though he had banqueted with the princess, now again he was hungry.

When supper was over, Gheesa drew from his breast his wedding dress of silver tissue, and gave it to his mother, and begged her to keep it care-

fully, "for," he said, "it has been entrusted to me by a companion, who has gone on a journey." Gheesa's mother wrapped the dress in a clean cloth, and placed it in a brass pot with a cover, and hid the pot away in a recess in the wall. But the ring that the princess had given him Gheesa hung round his neck by a string, and kept it in his bosom continually day and night.

To make a long story short, Gheesa remained with his mother, and occupied himself as before. Each day he cut grass in the jungle; in the evening he sold what he had cut in the market, and brought back the price to his mother. But always he thought of his bride, and each morning and evening he offered prayers that they might ere long be again united. In this manner a twelvemonth passed away. But now we must return to the princess.



PART THE THIRD.

WHEN Gheesa stumbled, the princess gave a cry, the attendants ran in. The princess said, "The prince has fallen on the terrace; go, raise him, and bring him in." The attendants hasted to obey, but the prince was not on the terrace. They fetched torches, and searched the garden, but neither was he in the garden, nor was he in the palace. They searched all night; in the morning they informed the king.

The king despatched horsemen and messengers

in all directions, he offered rewards, and he sent letters to the governors of the provinces, but all in vain. The prince was not found, nor could any tidings of him be ascertained.

When a month had gone by, the king ordered that the search should cease, for he said, "Of a surety the prince is dead, or else some Jin or spirit has carried him away." But the princess said that she was sure that the prince still lived, and she besought the king her father that she herself might go and seek and recover him.

At first the king refused, but when day by day the princess wept and entreated, his heart was softened and he consented. He made ready an army, with horse and foot, and camels and elephants, and the princess took her nurse with her, and set out to search for the prince her husband.

The princess marched to the East and she marched to the West. She journeyed from province to province, and from kingdom to kingdom: everywhere she made inquiries, but no intelligence of the prince could she discover.

When eight months had thus passed, the princess began to lose hope. "Alas! alas!" she said, "I fear that what the king said is true, and that my love is dead, or else that some Jin or evil spirit has carried him away, and I shall see him no more!"

Soon she fell into a deep melancholy: she ceased to smile, she ceased almost to eat, she sat the livelong day with bent head and downcast eyes, silent and dejected. The princess's attendants became alarmed; they said, "If the princess thus continues she will fall ill or die, and the king will blame us."

They endeavoured to amuse her; they brought before her dancers and jugglers, and at every town and city they made proclamation, that whoever could cause the princess to laugh or smile should receive as a reward as many golden pieces as he could carry. In hope of the reward many came, but none succeeded; they sang and told stories and exhibited performances, but the princess neither smiled nor laughed, nor did she even raise her head or lift her eyes: she sat as before, sad and dejected, uttering only sighs and lamentations. And thus the army marched and marched, till at length, by chance, it arrived at the city where Gheesa resided.

Gheesa had returned from the jungle with his grass, when he heard a crier making a proclamation: he drew near and listened. The crier beat a drum, and when the people had gathered round,

he cried and said, "A great princess has arrived and is encamped without the city," and then he continued, that "whoever could amuse the princess and drive away her melancholy, and make her smile or laugh, he should be given as much gold as he could carry."

Gheesa thought to himself, "Perhaps my story may amuse the princess!" So when he had returned home, and supper was over, he made an excuse to his mother, and repaired to the princess's camp. When the guards learnt his errand, they admitted him, and the chamberlain conducted him to the princess's tent, and said that he had come to try and amuse the princess with a tale.

The princess was seated with her head bent, and her eyes cast down, and over her head was a thick veil; her nurse sat beside her, and her

maidens were around her. The nurse desired Gheesa to seat himself at the end of the tent, and commence his story. Gheesa inquired what story he should tell? his own or some one else's? As Gheesa spoke, the princess started; she whispered to the nurse that he should tell his own story.

Gheesa began, and related how he had gone to the river, and caught the fish and met the Fukkeer, and found himself in the desert, and journeyed on to the city, and how he had been beaten at the palace, and carried through the air by the Jins. In a word, bit by bit, he described to the princess all that had befallen him.

As Gheesa proceeded in his narrative, the princess became more and more interested. First she raised her eyes, then she sat upright, then

she complained that the tent was dark, and called for more lights, and had them placed where Gheesa sat, and looked towards him, and began to tremble.

When Gheesa had concluded his story, the princess rose and went to an inner tent, and called for the nurse, and embraced her and said, "O nurse! wish me joy, for I have found the prince my husband." But the nurse answered, "In such a matter it is well to be cautious; the young man may have heard the story from another."

The princess returned to the tent, and through the nurse she inquired of Gheesa what had become of the dress of tissue that he wore at his wedding? Gheesa, in reply, told how he had given it to his mother, and how his mother had hid it away in the wall. The princess desired

him to fetch it. Gheesa ran home and returned with the brass pot, and gave it to the nurse, and the nurse presented it to the princess, and when the princess lifted the cover, lo! within was the dress of silver tissue without seam or join!

But the nurse whispered, "He may have received the dress from whoever told him the story!" The princess replied that she would make another trial; and then she addressed Gheesa herself, and asked suddenly, "And where is the ring that your bride gave you?"

At the sound of the princess's voice Gheesa started; next he began to wonder and doubt. He thought to himself, "How does the princess know that I received a ring?" for in his story he had not said so. However, he drew the ring from his bosom, and the princess saw that it

was the emerald ring she had given her bridegroom.

But the nurse whispered still again, "It is well to be cautious: he may have received the ring with the dress." The princess whispered in reply, that she would try him a third time. Then addressing Gheesa, she asked, "If you beheld your bride, would you know her?" Gheesa answered, "I would know her among ten thousand!"

The princess desired Gheesa to wait without. Then she rose quickly, and placed one of her maidens in her own seat, and threw her own veil over the maiden's head, and went herself and sat among the other attendants. When she had seated herself, she said to the nurse, "Bring in the young man and ask him, if among us he can find his bride?"

Gheesa entered, and approached the seat where sat the maiden in the princess's robes. The maiden lifted her veil, and Gheesa sighed, for he saw she was not his bride. Then he thought perhaps the princess is hiding among her attendants, and he looked at them one by one, and sighed again, for the princess was not among the attendants. But in the corner of the tent a maiden was seated: her head was bowed, and over it was cast a cotton shawl. Gheesa raised the shawl, and uttered a cry of joy, for the maiden was the princess, his long-lost bride!

The princess and Gheesa embraced and wept for joy; the nurse and the attendants also wept at beholding them; and as the news spread throughout the whole camp, there was joy and congratulation. The princess ordered, and Gheesa was arrayed again in royal robes, and his mother

was sent for, and the next day the princess set out with the army to return to her own country. When the king her father heard of her approach, he came out to meet her, and he embraced his daughter and Gheesa, and conducted them to their palace of crystal, and for seven days, throughout the whole city, there was feasting and rejoicing, and Gheesa's mother was also given a palace to dwell in.

In due time sons and daughters were born to Gheesa, and when the king died Gheesa succeeded him in the kingdom.





SHORT STORIES.



*DRIPTING.**

ONCE upon a time, there lived an old woman; she resided in a thatched cottage outside the village, not far from the forest. One afternoon, a friend, another old woman, came to see her; the two old women sat chatting together. The friend said to the

* This story in a slightly varied form appeared some years ago, in "Old Deccan Days," a collection of legends of Southern

old woman, "Sister! are you not afraid to live here all alone?—do you not fear the tiger?"

The old woman answered, "I do not fear the tiger; what I fear is the dripping; when the rain falls, the dripping comes through the thatch and troubles me. No, I do not fear the tiger, I fear only the dripping."

Now it happened that the tiger had left the forest, and come to the cottage with the intention of eating the old woman. While the two old women were chatting, he was lying outside in the shed, waiting till it should be dark. As the women talked he listened.

When he heard the old woman say that she did not fear the tiger he marvelled. He thought to himself, "What manner of old woman is this, India. I have, however, retained the story, as I had written it long previously, in its present form, as it was related to me, by one of my servants, in the Upper Provinces.—M. T.

that she does not fear me, before whom even the elephants tremble?" When presently he heard the old woman say that "she feared dripping," he became alarmed. He said to himself, "Who is this Dripping that the old woman fears, who does not fear me?"

The old women continued to talk, and the tiger listened again. The friend looked out and said, "Sister! I must go: the clouds are gathering, before long it will rain!" The old woman looked out and replied, "Yes, it will rain before dark; and when it has rained one watch the dripping will come, and I shall be miserable." She added again, "Yes, I do not fear the tiger, but I fear dripping."

When the tiger heard the old women thus talk he trembled, and said, "Alas! alas! why did I leave the forest? And now what shall I do?

If I stay, Dripping will come; if I leave I may meet him on the road."

The friend bade the old woman farewell, and returned to the village. The tiger lay in the shed shaking with fear, afraid to go, lest he should meet Dripping on the way, fearful to stay lest Dripping should arrive and find him. He trembled so that the shed shook. The old woman felt the shaking, and exclaimed, "Ah! the wind has risen and shakes the walls; the rain will soon begin to fall, and then will come dripping."

Presently it began to rain. The tiger crouched himself in a corner of the shed; he moaned and said, "It rains! Dripping will soon come, and I am lost if he sees me." The old woman heard the tiger moaning. She said, "Ah! it is thundering, dripping will soon be here!" "And I shall meet my death when he does," the tiger thought.

While this was going on at the cottage in the village, the washerman had come home from the river. He had washed his clothes at the river bank, and brought them back laden on his donkey; but while he was lifting off the bundle and carrying it into his house, the donkey strayed away. When the washerman returned to take the donkey to the stable, it was nowhere to be seen. The washerman set off in search of the animal.

He searched and searched till at length he arrived at the old woman's cottage. By this time it was dark, and the clouds and the falling rain made it darker. The washerman saw some animal lying under the shed, he thought it was his donkey, he raised his stick and dealt it a heavy blow and exclaimed, "Get up! and come home, you tiresome brute; there is my supper

waiting, and here have I been an hour seeking you!"

When the tiger had heard the steps of the washerman approaching, he had thought, "Here is Dripping coming, I must prepare for death." When he felt the blow he said, "Now, is my last hour come!" When he was merely desired to get up, he was overjoyed. He thought, "Perhaps after all Dripping may take compassion on me."

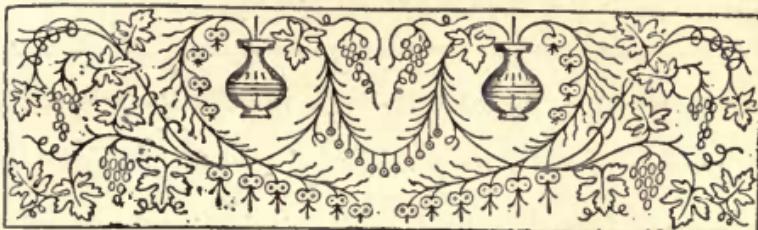
Well, to make the story short, the washerman drove, and the tiger went on, till they came to the village. The washerman then said, "Perhaps in the night this ass may stray away again, it is best that I put him in the pound, so that in the morning I may find him." So he drove the tiger to the pound, and fastened his leg by an iron chain. It was so dark

that he did not perceive that the animal was a tiger.

In the morning all the village came running together; what did they see in the pound but a tiger? Presently the washerman came to take out his donkey. When the tiger saw him he bowed his head and implored mercy. He said, "Only spare my life, my Lord Dripping, and I will depart from this region, and forswear the flesh of men."

The men of the village took an oath from the tiger; then they opened the gate of the pound and the washerman led the tiger by the chain to the forest, and there released him; the tiger gave thanks and departed, and forsook that region.

When the old woman learned the peril she had escaped, she left her cottage, and came and resided in the village.



THE SHOWMAN.

THERE was once a poor man who, when other trades failed, turned showman.

He got a peep-show, and went about exhibiting it. The show was in a box, and to make it look attractive the man had the outside painted, and at one end he put a looking-glass. He went from city to city, and from village to village. Some gave him pence, now and then he got silver: on the whole he made a living.

But at length there came a famine in the land. The rich could hardly buy food, the poor

began to starve, no one had money to spend on amusements; so, to avoid dying of hunger, the showman travelled off with his show to another country. He travelled and travelled till he came to a city, and there he saw a notice that whoever would free the city from the tiger should marry the king's daughter.

The showman inquired where the tiger was, and what he had done, that such a reward was offered to get rid of him. The people whom he asked informed him that the tiger lived in the forest, and slew travellers, so that the road to the city in that direction was closed. At times, also, the tiger came into the city and devoured the inhabitants. Many had tried to kill him, but, as yet, none had succeeded; so at length the king had offered his daughter.

On hearing this the showman went to the

forest; he presently came in sight of the tiger. On seeing the tiger he burst out laughing. The tiger stopped astonished; he said to himself: "At the sight of me the beasts fly, even the elephants tremble, and yet this man only laughs!" The tiger began to fear some snare, and that perhaps the showman was a spirit, or had a spell. The tiger came on slowly, the showman laughed the louder, the tiger became frightened; he asked the showman why he laughed. "Why," he said, "do you not tremble and fly?" The showman replied, that he laughed to think how foolish the tiger would soon feel when he found himself inside the show box. The tiger said, "What! do you talk of putting me inside your box?" The showman answered, "Yes! I have a larger tiger than you there already, but there will be room for you both—haste! and come in." And so

saying, he placed the box on the ground. The tiger advanced; as he did he saw in the glass a terrible tiger, as he thought, within the box: it seemed larger and fiercer than himself.

The tiger trembled. The showman said, "Come in quick, or I will let out the other tiger." Then the tiger fell at the showman's feet, and implored mercy. The showman said that he would spare his life on condition that he would promise to leave the country and cease to slay travellers and the people of the city. The tiger said, "Whatever you command, I will perform." So the showman returned to the city, and the tiger followed him, and bowed himself before the king, and forswore the slaying of travellers or of any of the king's subjects.

Then the tiger took the showman again to the forest, and conducted him to his cave, and gave

to him all the money and treasures he had plundered from travellers. Having done this, the tiger bade the showman farewell, and departed to another region. The showman married the king's daughter; besides, he found such treasures in the cave that next to the king he was the wealthiest person in the city. When the king died, he succeeded him on the throne.





THE BLACK SNAKE.

ONCE a black snake came to a village and took up his abode in a hole in a bank ; it bit several cattle and some children, and all whom it bit died. The villagers held a consultation, and sent for a serpent charmer to charm the snake away. The charmer came, and stood before the hole, and played his flute. He had not played a minute when the head of the snake appeared ; he had not played two minutes, before the snake came out and raised himself ; when he perceived the

charmer, he breathed towards him, and the charmer fell dead.

The villagers took his body, and burned it, and sent for another charmer. But when he learnt the fate of the other charmer, he refused to go to the snake's hole, and returned to his own village. So it happened to the other charmers who came: when they heard the story of the first charmer they returned to their homes.

At length there came to the village a Negro. He was black and very big, he had great teeth, and his lower lip hung down nearly to his chin; but in all the country there was no serpent-charmer so skilful as he. He said to the men of the village, "Get me five score little pots of unbaked clay." The villagers went to the potter, and he made them five score small pots.

The Negro took one score of the pots and built

with them a wall before the snake's hole; he sat behind the wall and commenced to play his flute. At the sound of the music the snake came out; he reared himself up, and breathed against the wall, the pots became hot: in four minutes they were baked red. When the Negro saw that the pots were baked red, he ceased playing, and the snake returned to his hole.

The Negro then called to the villagers. He said, "Take away these red pots, and bring me another score of the unbaked pots." When the pots were brought, the Negro built them into a wall as before, and played his flute behind it. At the sound of the music the snake came forth; he breathed against the pots: in eight minutes they were baked red. Then the Negro ceased to play, and the snake went back to his hole. The Negro called to the villagers. They removed

the red pots, and brought unbaked ones, and the Negro sat behind them and played.

But when the snake came forth and breathed, the pots became hot and brown; but though the snake breathed and breathed, they did not become red. The Negro perceived that the venom of the snake was diminishing. The fourth score of pots only became hot. On the fifth score, the breath of the snake had no effect, and the Negro perceived that his venom was exhausted.

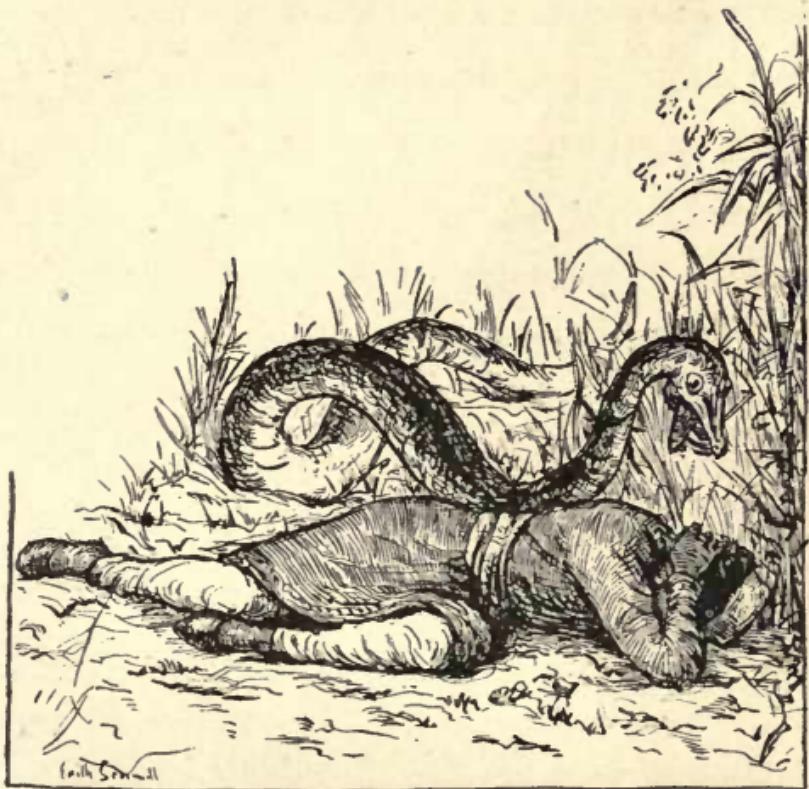
When the Negro perceived this, he dropped his flute, and ran quickly and seized the snake by the neck; he took an iron pot and thrust the snake into it, and on the mouth of the pot he fastened a cover; then he lay down to rest.

While the Negro rested, the people of the village came together, and consulted what they

should do with the snake. Some said, "Let us throw the pot in the river;" others said, "Let us make a large fire, and put the pot in the midst, and keep it there till the snake is consumed."

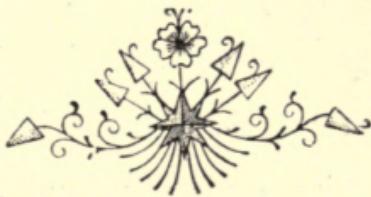
While the villagers were thus consulting, a boy went to the pot. He said to himself, "Before the snake is killed I will see him: he will not harm me now that his venom is exhausted." So saying, he lifted up the cover, but before he could replace it, the snake glided out. The snake did not bite the boy, he did not bite the cattle or the children, nor the men of the village: he went through the lanes and the yards till he came to where the Negro was lying.

Though the snake glided quietly, the Negro heard him approach. He sat up and exclaimed, "Woe is me, for my hour is come!" As he



"Till he came to where the Negro was lying."—*Page 242.*

uttered these words, the snake bit him in the foot. Immediately his body swelled and he expired. When the snake saw that the Negro was dead, he turned and went into the jungle, and was no more seen.





THE STORY OF THE BRAHMAN THAT WENT TO COURT.

N a certain village there once dwelt a Brahman, a holy man. The fame of his piety reached the Raja of the country. The Raja said, "It is a good thing for a king to have near him a virtuous and truthful man, on whose word he can rely." So he sent to the Brahman to come to his court to reside there. But the Brahman refused. "Courtiers," he said, "are full of deceit; the man in a court who is truthful and honest becomes the object

of envy and detraction: in the end he is falsely accused and ruined."

The Raja, however, pressed the Brahman. "Holy father," he said, "I will listen to nothing that may be said against you, only, I beseech you, come and reside near me and be my adviser." In the end the Brahman was persuaded, and came.

When the courtiers perceived that the Brahman was truthful and honest, they began to speak evil of him to the Raja, and to invent tales to injure him. But the Raja would not listen to the tales or attend to the evil speaking; on the contrary, he rebuked the courtiers and threatened them. Then the courtiers said, "We must wait and have recourse to stratagem, and in the end we shall succeed."

The Brahman remained at court for a whole

year; then he asked the Raja for permission to return home for a period of three months and see his relations. The Raja took a promise from the Brahman that he would return after the expiration of the three months; and then the Raja gave permission, and the Brahman departed. So soon as he had left, the courtiers said among themselves, "Now is our opportunity."

On the third day after the Brahman had left, when the Raja entered the hall of audience, he beheld that the courtiers were sorrowful, and standing with downcast eyes, and whispering among themselves. Presently one of them exclaimed, "Alas! that so good a man should have been taken from us!" Another answered, "Such a collection of virtues! such a treasure-house of excellences! when again will his like be discovered?"

The Raja inquired, "Has any evil occurred? has any misfortune happened to any one in the night?"

The courtiers hung their heads, and were silent. The Raja inquired for the second time. Then one of the courtiers replied, "Alas! alas! news has come that the Brahman is dead. He fell among robbers on his journey and was slain, and this morning the intelligence arrived." On hearing this announcement the Raja wept, and the courtiers joined in his sorrow, and praised the Brahman and lamented him.

But the Brahman was not dead, nor had he fallen among thieves; he had reached his home in safety, and at the end of the three months he returned. The Brahman reached the city at even, and put up for the night in the caravan-serai. The next morning, when the Raja entered

the hall of audience, he beheld the courtiers appearing as if they were frightened, and whispering earnestly together.

The Raja was alarmed, and inquired if any misfortune had occurred in the night, or if news had reached of the approach of any danger? The courtiers answered, "Alas! a great misfortune has occurred, and a great danger threatens our lord; an evil spirit has assumed the form of the Brahman, and has entered the city. It is seeking for the king, and if it touches him it will destroy him."

The Raja, in great terror, gave orders to the guards, that if any person appeared in the likeness of the Brahman they should not admit him.

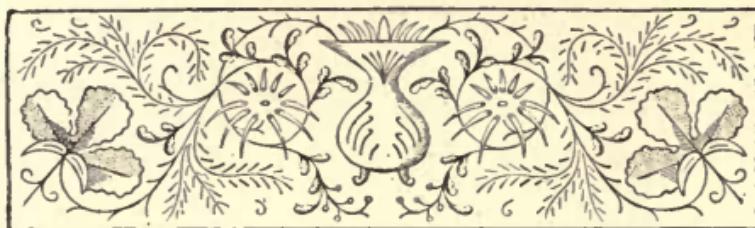
When the Brahman had rested after the fatigues of his journey, he bathed and put on clean clothes, and took his way to the palace;

but the guards refused him admittance. They even reviled him, and said, “Depart! thou evil spirit, or we will slay thee!” and they raised their swords as if to strike, and drew their bows. In like manner the people of the city avoided him, and the children, thinking him a spirit, fled at his approach.

After some days the Brahman became aware of the deceit that the courtiers had practised towards him, and he resolved to see the Raja by stealth, and explain to him the fraud. So he ascended a tree at the gate of the city, and hid in the branches, and waited till the Raja should pass by. When a fortnight had passed the Raja left the city to go a-hunting; as he rode by the tree the Brahman called out. At the sound of the voice the Raja raised his eyes, and beheld the Brahman preparing to descend.

At the sight he was filled with terror. He cried out, "The evil spirit is approaching me!" and leaped from his horse and fled. And the guards shouted, and drew their bows; and, in his eagerness to descend, the Brahman's foot slipped, and he fell to the ground and was killed.

In process of time the truth of the story became known. When the Raja of the adjoining kingdom heard the story he exclaimed, "It is true, as the wise men have said of old, that he who would succeed at court must not be content to serve the king alone, but must also conciliate the courtiers."



THE HOLY TIGER.

IN a certain city, long ago, there dwelt a scribe. He had much property, and Providence had also bestowed on him the blessing of offspring; he had seven sons, and the name of the youngest was Khoob Lal. Now, it came to pass, in process of time, that the scribe died, and his sons began to dispute about his inheritance.

The dispute grieved Khoob Lal. He said to himself, "If a man should live a thousand years, in the end he must die, and then all that he has

enjoyed will be as though it had not existed. Why then dispute for that which thus passes away?" Having thus reflected, Khoob Lal resolved to abandon the world, and devote his life to religious contemplation. So he made over his share of his father's wealth to his brothers, and he put on a yellow dress, and allowed his hair to grow, and departed from the city, and took up his residence in a forest. There he became a Goshine, and assumed the name of Anunt Gire.

For seven years Anunt Gire practised austerities; in the end he became a Karamâtee,* and acquired power over spirits and animals, and the secrets by which diseases are cured.

Now it fell out that the Raja of that country became ill, and, though he consulted many physicians, none were able to cure him. One day

* One who has acquired the power of working miracles.

the Raja's servants said to him, "It is evident that physicians are of no avail to cure the illness of our Lord. Instead of consulting them, let the king apply to some holy man acquainted with secrets." They also said: "There is, in the forest, a holy man, a Goshine. He has practised austerities and become a Karamâtee. Doubtless he will find a remedy for the king's malady."

The king hearkened to the advice of his servants, and sent a message to Anunt Gire. And Anunt Gire wrote a charm, and also he recommended that the king should go on a pilgrimage, and should perform certain other acts of devotion. Anunt Gire also himself practised some difficult austerities, on the king's behalf. In the end the Raja was cured, and recovered of his illness.

The Raja sent to Anunt Gire gold and silver in token of his gratitude, but Anunt Gire refused

the gold and silver. "What use," he said, "are treasures to one who, like me, has abandoned the world?" But the Raja insisted. Then Anunt Gire said, "If the Raja desires to do aught, let him build me a temple."

So the Raja sent masons, and workmen skilful in the carving of stone, and they built for Anunt Gire a temple by the side of his shed in the forest, and also a tank for sacred fishes and a terrace, and it became the habit of Anunt Gire to sit on the terrace and meditate. But when the winds blew, the dust and the leaves fell on the terrace and covered it. So Anunt Gire made a broom of leaves, and each morning he swept the terrace.

Now it happened one day, that as Anunt Gire was sweeping the terrace, a tiger came out of the forest and stood by and beheld. As the tiger

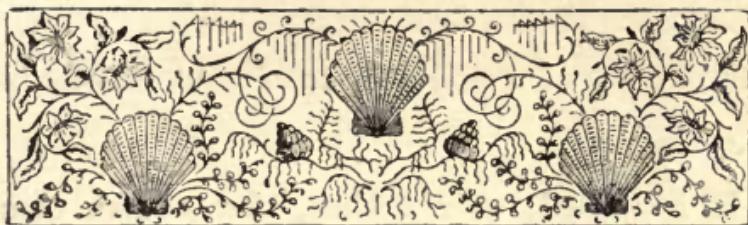
looked, his heart was smitten with compunction, and his conscience was pricked. He said to himself, "See! this holy man, aged and feeble of body, is sweeping with pain and labour, and I, the strongest of beasts, am standing idle."

When night came, and Anunt Gire had retired to his shed and was sleeping, then the tiger ascended and sat on the terrace and moved his tail from side to side, and this he did till the morning. The next day, when Anunt Gire had performed his devotions, he came out and sat on his terrace, and lo! it was swept clean, and there was on the pavement neither leaves nor dust nor any other impurity.

When this had continued for six months Anunt Gire called the tiger, and gave him thanks, and blessed him and pronounced over him a charm, so that in the future arrows should not hurt him,

nor could he be entrapped nor caught in pitfalls. Then the tiger came forward and bowed his head, and rubbed his forehead reverently on the terrace, and took an oath, that henceforward he would abstain from destroying men or devouring their cattle, but would satisfy his hunger on the deer and the wild animals, and this oath the tiger fulfilled; also, so long as he lived, he came each night and swept the terrace.





FOLK LORE.

THE MAN WHO INCREASED HIS APPETITE.

THERE was once a Fukkeer who had discovered the secret of doubling things.

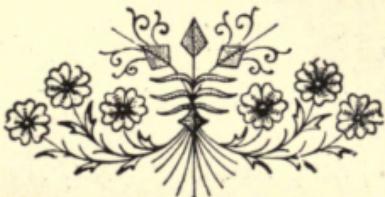
People brought him silver and gold and jewels; he performed incantations, and the things became doubled in amount. In place of one silver coin, the owners found two coins;

and in place of a single piece of gold, one double the size.

It happened, after a time, that a man came to the Fukkeer. The Fukkeer inquired of him what he had brought: "Give it to me, my son," he said, "and I will double it." The man answered, "I have brought nothing, O holy father! only my appetite: that is what I desire to have doubled."

The Fukkeer performed his incantations, and the man returned to his home, able to consume twice as much food as before. For some time he was very happy; he spent most of the day in eating and drinking. But presently he became uneasy. Though his appetite had doubled his means remained the same, and he daily had to encroach on them to obtain the additional food he now required. In the end he spent all that he

had accumulated, and then he began to suffer hunger. He did not die, for he earned enough to satisfy his natural appetite; but he passed the rest of his life in torments from the cravings of the appetite he had acquired artificially.





THE GREAT ELIXIR.

THE great Elixir is white and resembles silver, but it is soft and can be cut with a knife and eaten. Whoever eats any of the great Elixir has a renewal of life. While the effect of the Elixir continues, he suffers neither from pain, nor sickness, nor sorrow. If he can continue to obtain the Elixir he will live for ever.

It is said that some of the Fukkeers who reside in the jungles and forests understand the secret of preparing the Elixir. Many monarchs

have desired to procure the Elixir, but it is not known for a certainty that any have obtained it save only the Emperor Mahommed Shah. The manner of his obtaining it is thus related.

The Emperor was holding audience in the palace at Delhi on the occasion of the anniversary of his coronation. His chiefs and nobles stood before him doing homage and presenting gifts. Some gave pearls, some gave diamonds, others shawls and golden coins, swords and armour. Whatever thing rich or rare was to be found in Hindostan, that the chiefs and the nobles presented.

The Emperor lifted up his eyes, and lo ! before the throne stood a Fukkeer. He had long hair plaited and twisted round his head ; his body was naked and smeared with ashes of wood ; over his shoulders was thrown a coarse shawl of goat's

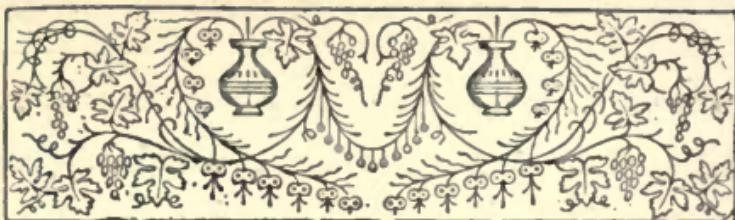
hair. The Emperor smiled, and addressing the Fukkeer, he said, "Sir Fukkeer! do you too bring a gift? and is it diamonds or pearls?"

The Fukkeer answered, "Yes, O Asylum of the World! I bring a gift, but it is more precious than diamonds, and as compared with it pearls are of no account." So saying, the Fukkeer advanced near to the Emperor's throne; he placed his hand in his girdle and drew forth a stick resembling silver. With his knife he cut from the stick a slice the thickness of a visiting card; he gave the slice to the Emperor and commanded him to eat it.

As the Emperor ate there ran through his veins as it were the stream of life. The Emperor stretched out his hand for more, but the Fukkeer was not there. None had seen him enter, none saw him depart. The effect of the Elixir lasted for

many years. During all that period the Emperor continued as strong and as vigorous as he was on the day he ate the slice, nor did he in appearance become older. But when the power of the Elixir had become exhausted, then the Emperor died.





TRANSMIGRATION.

HE who knows the secret of transmigration can call the soul of a disciple into his own body, and convey his own soul into the body of the disciple. It is therefore dangerous to study this science; nevertheless the Emperor Akbar desired to attain it, and he became the disciple of a Fukkeer and learnt the mystery, and thus the Fukkeer acquired power over him.

But the soul can only be called when the disciple is unaware, therefore the Emperor re-

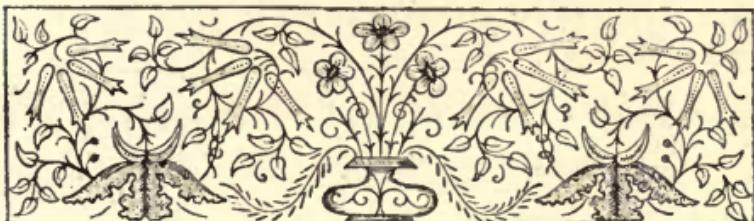
mained constantly vigilant. But it happened after a time, that one day at noon, the Emperor was reposing negligently and without thought of the Fukkeer, or of guarding his own soul. The Fukkeer saw the opportunity, and uttered the mystic words, and immediately the souls were exchanged: the soul of the Fukkeer entered the body of the Emperor, and the soul of the Emperor was transferred to the body of the Fukkeer.

Then the Fukkeer arose, and, in the body of the Emperor, he entered the palace and proceeded to the apartments of the Empress, the Lady Miriam. The Empress was perplexed: the form was that of the Emperor, but the words and movements were those of another. The Empress was filled with apprehension, and fled away and concealed herself.

The Fukkeer then commenced to walk to and

fro through the palace; as he passed, all bowed and prostrated themselves. When the Fukkeer beheld the riches and splendour of the palace, and observed the homage and reverence of the nobles and servants, he became filled with pride and exultation, and he forgot the Emperor, and that he must keep guard against him. The Emperor now perceived his opportunity and pronounced the magic words, and in an instant the souls returned to their own proper bodies.

When the nobles and ministers learnt the story, they recommended that the Fukkeer should be put to death, but the Emperor was merciful and spared him; however, by the assistance of learned men the Emperor deprived the Fukkeer of his power.



THE MAN WHO CALLED THE SOUL.

IT is known to the skilful in mysteries that men have two souls: one is the real soul, the other is the soul that animates the body. When a man sleeps there are spells that will call out this second soul from the body, and oblige it to disclose secrets.

There was once a man who desired to acquire this power. So he went to the forest to a Fukkeer and served him, and in return the Fukkeer taught him the spell. The man returned to his home exultant. He said to himself, "I shall

now know all secrets, and where are the hidden treasures." When night came he uttered the spell, and summoned the soul of his neighbour. He said to the soul, "Soul! tell me some place where gold and silver are hidden." The soul answered, "In the mound, near the dry well, there are ingots of gold, and several pots filled with silver coins."

The next day the man went to the mound, and dug in the place where the soul had directed him, and found the silver coins and the gold ingots. So he became rich, and bought land, and built himself a house, and had servants and carriages, and horses and elephants. And still, ever and anon, he continued to summon the soul of his neighbour, and learnt from it other secrets.

But one day, as he was passing by, he heard

two Brahmans conversing. The one said to the other, "Those who call souls are foolish: in the hour of death they are terrified, and afterwards they are tormented." The man when he heard this was alarmed; he went again to the forest and sought the Fukkeer, and inquired of him if what the Brahman had said was true.

The Fukkeer answered and said, "What you have heard is correct. At the hour of your death the souls you have called will appear to you in terrible aspect; and after death your own soul will become their servant, and undergo suffering and torment." The man inquired, "Is there no means, by which I can loose my power over the souls that I call, so that at the time of death they may not appear to me?"

But the Fukkeer replied, that he knew of no spell by which he who once called souls could

loose his power over them. Then the man returned to the city, and applied to the Brahmans. The Brahmans recommended austerities. So the man gave over his goods and his houses and his lands to his children, and he put on the dress of a Fukkeer, and abandoned his home, and abode in solitary places, and went on pilgrimages, and practised austerities. But whether he succeeded in loosing his power over the souls he had called, is not known.





THE NORTH OF HINDOSTAN.

IF you travel north and north, you come at length to the mountains of Shewalic. They are so called because they consist of one hundred and twenty-five thousand peaks. They are full of rocks and precipices, torrents, forests, and wild beasts, and a savage race of men live in the valleys. On the summit of the mountains abide the gods and the fairies.

Beyond the Shewalic mountains are the Heemalah, that is, the necklace of snow. On these mountains the snow does not ever melt; and the great deities reside. The mountains are

so high, that the birds cannot fly over them. Men cannot ascend them on account of flowers that grow below the snow. Whoever inhales the scent of these flowers becomes giddy, his breath fails, and from his mouth and nostrils the blood bursts forth ; if he does not descend, he dies.

On one of the high peaks the deity Budree Narain resides ; he guards Hindostan on the north. When Budree Narain descends the mountain, the rocks on which he places his feet become gold and silver, but to the sight of men they still appear as stones and rocks.

Beyond the Heemalah is the region of Cheen. Men can reach Cheen, through the passes of the Heemalah, but they cannot go beyond Cheen, for there is a wall of mountains higher than the Heemalah, and through these mountains there are no passes. On the highest mountain a bird

sits; at each watch of the day and night he calls out once—

“ Around are rocks, below is grass,
Beyond me never foot can pass.”

On the other side of the mountains is the kingdom of Maha Cheen. Each morning the Emperor of Maha Cheen mounts his throne. When he is seated, he looks around and exclaims, “In all the world, is there any king like me?” Then the four ministers come forward and prostrate themselves before the throne, and answer, “O Asylum of the Universe! there is no king like you!” and the nobles and the guards, and the courtiers and the great chiefs and the people all answer likewise, “There is no king like you, O Emperor of Maha Cheen, no king! no king!” and this ceremony is repeated every morning.



THE FAIRIES.

AMONG the mountains of Komoun is a hill having three peaks. This hill is lofty and precipitous, and is frequented by the fairies; on this account the herdsmen avoid it, for the fairies are malignant to men and animals, although they are beloved by the deities.

If the cattle stray on this mountain, they are sure to meet with some misfortune; either they fall over precipices, or they are torn by wild beasts, or they contract diseases. And if

by accident men happen to meet with the fairies they do not live for long afterwards.

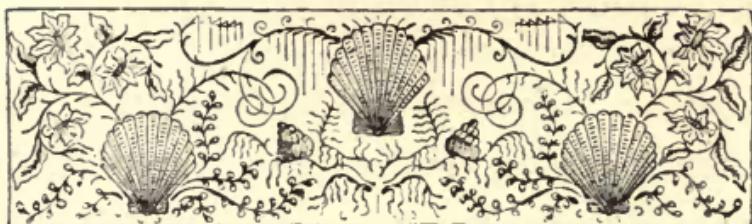
In former times a herdsman resided in a village near the foot of this mountain. It happened, in the season of the rains, that he drove out his herd of cattle to graze. The clouds and mists hung low on the hill-sides and obscured the paths, and unawares the herdsman ascended the hill of the fairies. Presently he came to an open space, and there he beheld three women. They were tall and very beautiful, and arrayed in silk dresses and jewels; the herdsman had never seen women so beautiful or so richly attired.

In the evening when he returned home he appeared to be affected in his mind. He spoke continually of the beauty of the three women he had seen on the mountain. He spoke of

them continually for three days without ceasing, neither eating, nor sleeping, nor drinking; on the fourth day he died.

The fairies have the appearance of women but are larger, and on their shoulders they have wings with feathers. The fairies dance before the gods and entertain them. At night they frequent the court of Raja Indra the king of the skies.





HOW ALEXANDER THE GREAT OBTAINED TREASURES FROM THE SEA.

IT is reported, that when Alexander the Great entered Hindostan, he devised a scheme for obtaining treasures from the sea. He had tents pitched on the shore; at night they were lighted up, musicians played, and women danced to the sound of the music. After a time the lights and the music attracted the mermen. First they came to the shallow water and listened, next they raised their heads

above the surface and looked, finally they grew bolder and came on the shore. In the course of a month they lost fear and approached close, and gazed on the faces of the women and watched them dancing.

The king of the mermen had seen nothing like it before: he was enchanted. When he learned that Alexander the Great had provided him this amusement, he desired to express his gratitude. He inquired of the dancing women what he could do for the Emperor in return.

The women answered, that he should desire his mermen to fetch pearls and gems from the ocean. The king gave his orders to the mermen, they plunged into the sea, and brought pearls and jewels from the hidden depths and laid them before the women. The women and the musicians bade farewell to the mermen, and returned

to Alexander the Great, and gave to him the treasures they had received.

So the Emperor in this manner acquired treasures and gems, the like of which had not been before seen on the face of the earth, nor have been seen since. When the story of what Alexander the Great had done became spread abroad, then other monarchs endeavoured in like manner to obtain gems from the sea. They sent tents and musicians and dancing women to the shores of the ocean, but they did not, any of them, succeed in attracting the mermen.





THE SANDAL-WOOD TREE.

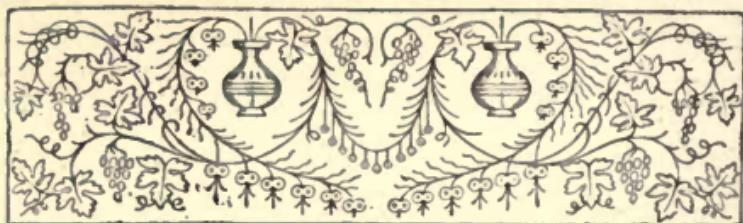
SNAKES may be killed, but of themselves they do not die. They live for a thousand years; then wings appear from their shoulders, and they turn into dragons, and fly away to the ocean. They fly and fly over the ocean till they come to an island in the South where the sandal-wood tree grows, and they twine themselves around it.

There is only one tree of sandal-wood in the whole world, and no one has ever beheld it. It grows in the midst of this island; a forest is all

around it; the perfume it exhales is so strong, that it scents all the trees of the forest.

The merchants come to the island, and cut the outer trees, and sell them for sandal-wood; but they are not really sandal-wood, they have only become scented from the odours of the real tree. If any man ventures far into the forest, he feels the fiery breath of the dragons, he faints and falls senseless; if he goes further, he dies. This is the cause why no one has ever seen the sandal-wood tree.





THE KING OF THE JACKALS.

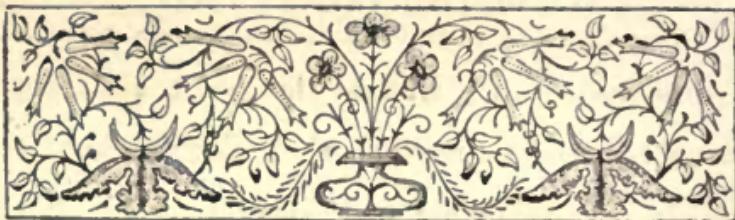
ON former days the jackals had no king. It happened that after a time, one of the jackals said to his fellows, "Let us have a king like the other beasts." The rest approved, and made him their king. Then they said, "How shall we know our king?" The new king answered, "I will fasten a red staff to my tail, and by this you will know me." So he fastened a red staff to his tail by a string.

For some time all went well, and the king was very proud of his red staff, and of the honour

it procured him. But at length the villagers assembled and came with their dogs to hunt the jackals. The jackals fled away to their holes. All the rest got in safely, but the king came last, and his red staff stuck at the entrance. The villagers saw it, and the poor king was dragged out and killed.

*WHAT THE JACKALS SAY.*

WHEN the jackals wander at night, the chief of the pack exclaims, "I am the king in the night time! I am the king in the night time!" And the other jackals answer, "You are! you are! you are!" If any one listens attentively, he can distinguish these words.



PRECIOUS STONES.

THERE are eighty-four varieties of gems, but of these only nine are regarded as precious. These nine stones are, the diamond, the emerald, the ruby, the sapphire, the cat's eye, the topaz, the coral, the turquoise, and the pearl. These nine precious stones have each different virtues, but they all avert the evil eye and conduce to prosperity.

Different stones are adapted to the different temperaments of men. A man when he has purchased a precious stone should wear it for

the period of one year. If during that time it does not avert some evil, or produce some good fortune, he should exchange it for a stone of a different kind, for it is evident that it is not in harmony with his temperament.

There was formerly a precious stone termed the “Red:” it was of the description of the ruby, but larger and more beautiful. However, for many ages this stone has not been seen.

Diamonds are found in the province of Gool-cund, and rubies are brought from the kingdom of Pigou, but emeralds came from above. The manner of their descent is thus related. It was told to an Emperor that the king of the Jins had a green vase, of a stone very precious, and so large that a child might bathe in it. The emperor obtained power over the Jins by

means of incantations, and sent a command that the vase should be brought him.

The king of the Jins gave the vase to a Jin and bade him bear the vase quickly to the Emperor. The Jin took the vase and flew with it through the sky, but in mid-air he was encountered by a demon. The demon endeavoured to wrest away the vase ; the Jin resisted. In the struggle, the vase was dropped and fell to the earth, and was broken into ten thousand pieces ; and these pieces are the emeralds now on earth.





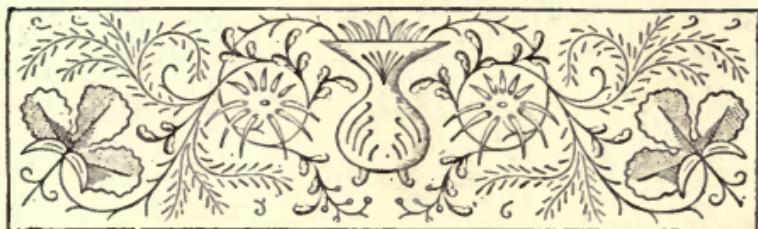
THE THREE LEARNED MEN.*

THREE learned men once went for a walk, and as they went they disputed which among them had attained to the highest knowledge. As they talked they came to a spot where lay scattered the bones of a dead tiger. Said one of the learned men, "I can bring these bones together." He uttered a spell, and the bones moved and joined, and the skeleton of the tiger lay before them.

* This story was taken down from oral narration, but I rather think it has been printed in some of the vernacular works.

Said the second learned man, "I can do more than this." So saying, he uttered a spell, and the skeleton was clothed in flesh and skin, and a dead tiger lay before them. Then said the third learned man, "I can do still more," and he uttered a spell, and the spirit came again into the body of the dead tiger, and it rose up and devoured the three learned men. When their fate became known, the people exclaimed, "What the sages of old have said is true, the most learned men are not always the wisest."





THE WALL OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

WHEN Alexander the Great invaded Hindostan he found that the region of Bengal was infested by ghosts and evil spirits, jins and demons. Alexander the Great drove away the spirits and demons to beyond the rivers into the country of Brimmah, and, to prevent their returning, he erected a barrier of hewn stone, and this barrier received the name of the wall of Alexander the Great. The position of this wall is not now known;

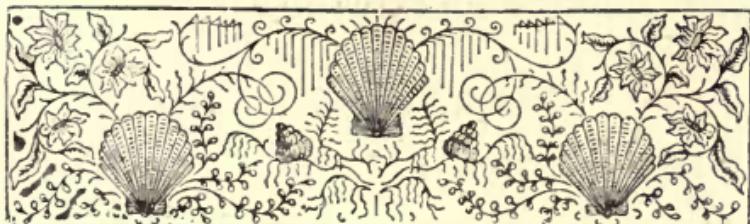
and among the learned and among travellers there are disputes as to whether the wall itself still exists.



GHOSTS.

LIF no lamp is lighted in a house for the period of fourteen days, the ghosts enter in and make it their dwelling. When the ghosts have once acquired possession of a house, it is not easy to expel them.

The most dangerous of ghosts is that termed the "Churale." It has the appearance of a young woman; but it can be known by the position of its feet, which are turned the wrong way. It appears in the daytime, and endeavours to entice men into solitary places; then it assumes the form of a devil, and tears them to pieces.



THE ASABE.

WEALTH obtained by fraud does not remain, and it also produces calamities and subjects the possessor to the visitations of the spirit termed the "Asabe." This spirit also afflicts the descendants of the person, even to the third generation.

There was once a man, who had a brother, and when the brother died, the man became guardian to the brother's children, and in process of time he defrauded them of their inheritance. In consequence, an evil spirit began to

afflict him. The spirit overshadowed him at night and in solitary places; in the end it disturbed his intellects. The sons of the man, and also his grandsons, were in like manner troubled by the spirit, and gradually they lost the wealth that the man had thus fraudulently acquired.





THE ENGLISH CEMETERY.

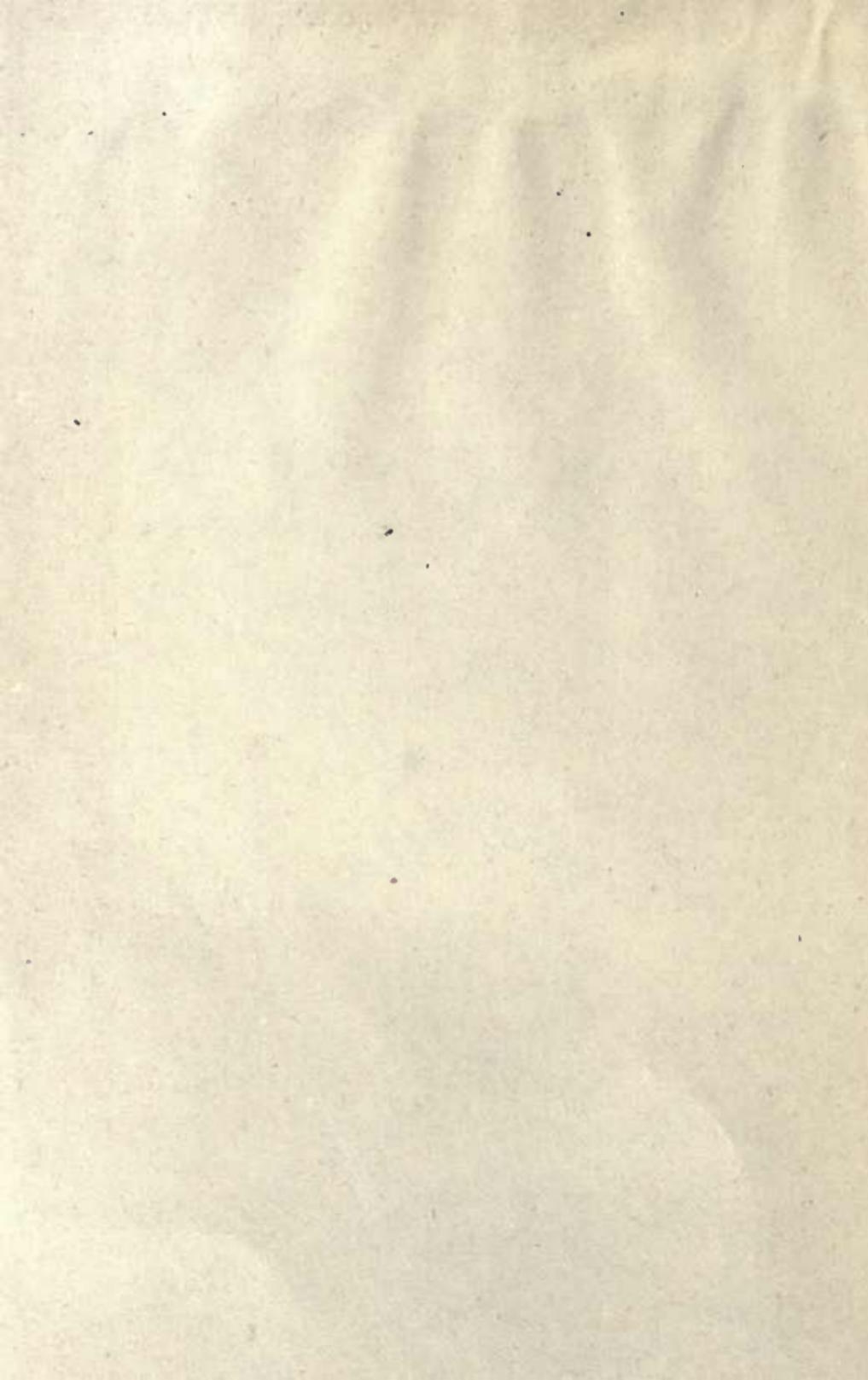
NEAR a certain city in Upper Hindostan is a deserted cemetery, where English soldiers were formerly buried, and near the cemetery is a garden. A man of the name of Punchum had charge of the garden, and lived in a hut within it. It happened one night, that Punchum heard sounds in the cemetery as of men calling, and he also perceived lights. He crept cautiously up to the wall of the cemetery, and looked over.

He saw that the English soldiers had come

out of their graves, and were eating and drinking, and conversing. Some called for wine, some for meat, and others for loaves of bread; they also sang. Their dresses and arms were of an ancient pattern, and their countenances very fierce. At the sight of them, Punchum was filled with terror, his heart died within him, and he fell senseless to the ground. When he came to himself, the lights were extinguished, and the sounds had ceased.

Punchum often afterwards heard the noise of shouting from the cemetery, and perceived lights, but he did not again venture to see what was going on.

THE END.



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